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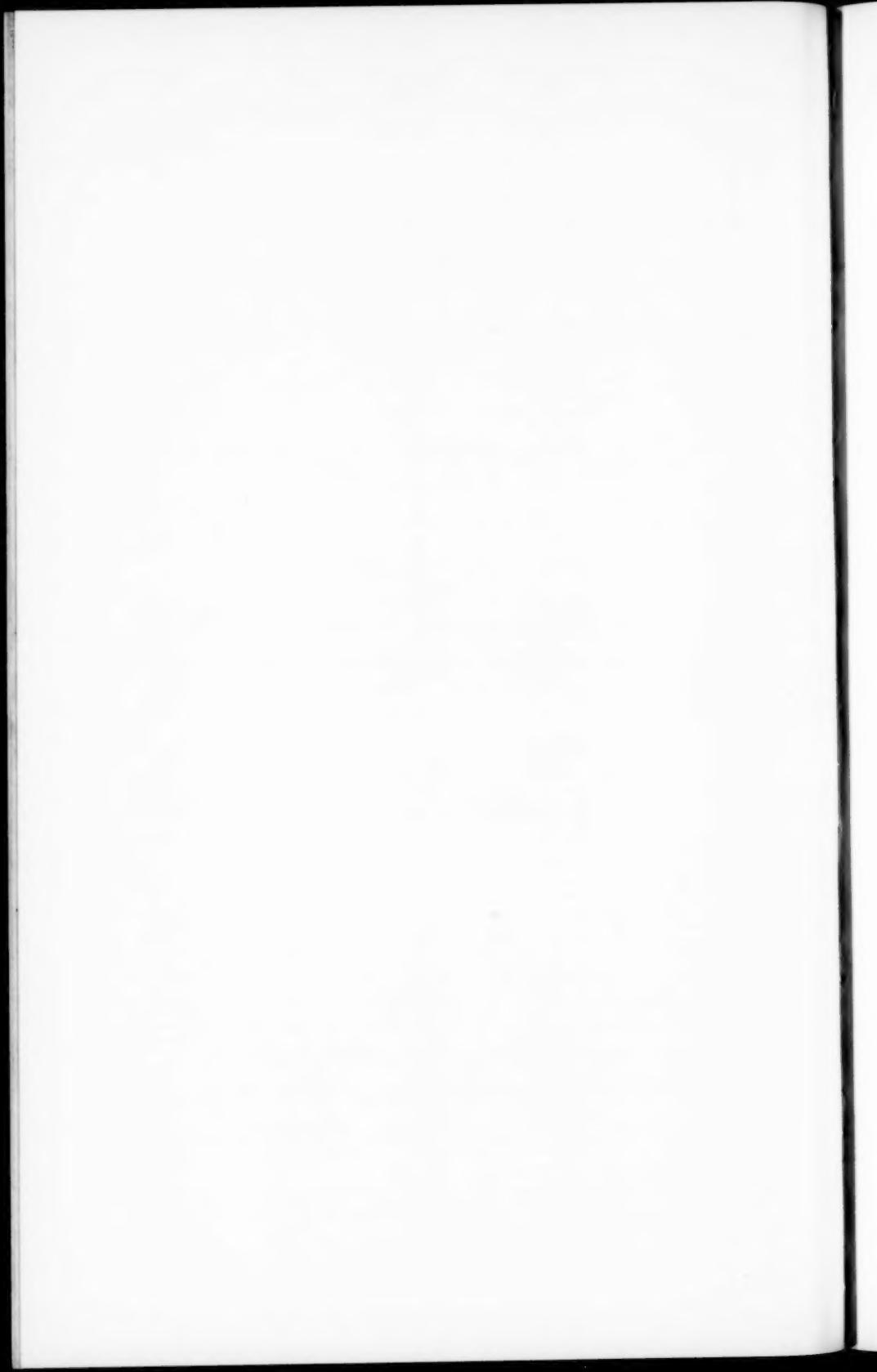
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*A Psychoanalytic Journal
for the Arts and Sciences*

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King Mark Disguised As Himself*

by

Katherine Jones

I should like to preface these remarks by saying that such knowledge as I have of psycho-analysis is acquired, not as yours is, from living material, but from lifeless books. This is why when I have laid before you certain facts that have struck me in the Tristan legend, I shall leave it to you, much better qualified than I can be, to draw most of the conclusions. I am, therefore, looking forward to a lively discussion at the end of this little paper.

I should like to recall to you the story of the Tristan legend, not because you are not familiar with it, but because in the telling I shall be able to stress the features which appear important to my theme. It is a very old legend which begins to be codified at about 1100, and the telling of it, in different shapes and forms, goes on to the present day.

Trisan "he of the sad birth," was born to a mother who on giving him birth chose death for herself. You will discern in all the different legends how this love-death motif, this struggle between Eros and Thanatos, goes on in the minds of the *dramatis personae* and in that of the artist who shapes the tragedy. Tristan's mother was forbidden by her hard brother, King Mark of Cornwall, to become her lover's wife, for that would have meant marrying a man below her status. Only when her lover distinguished himself in battle did King Mark relent. By then it was too late, her lover dead and she dying. So she called her son Tristan, the sad one. Surely a bad omen; it is no wonder that he lived up to his name.

Tristan was brought up by a faithful retainer whom he called father. Whether some half-known feeling told him that the man unfamiliar with courtly manners was not his

*Read before the Imago Group, London, on January 15, 1959

real father, whether it was therefore easier for him to construct the "family romance" or even to seek for the lost parent, at that we can only guess. All we know is that it came as a shock to him that he was not, so to speak, his father's son and he continued to love and honour his foster father. When he met King Mark as a stripling he had to part with the man who had brought him up. Mark, drawn to Tristan by a spontaneous affection which later he explained as conditioned by the bonds of blood, adopted him and had him educated at the court.

I am here condensing many of the numerous legends, but most of them credit Mark with a deep and outspoken love for his nephew. Deep enough to choose Tristan for his heir and outspoken enough to call forth the hatred and jealousy of his courtiers. Tristan, imbued with a lively sense of honour and justice, refused to succeed Mark and offered to set out on a quest of choosing a bride for his uncle.

Now I have to go back a little in Tristan's history and remind you that Cornwall was a subject state to Ireland and paid a tribute to her. This consisted in a number of noble Cornish maidens and youths. Every year the Irish Queen's brother came to extort this tribute. He is described as a man of giant stature, the betrothed and protector of the Queen's young daughter Iseult. Cornwall smarted under these hard conditions, but none of the knights could summon the courage to fight the giant hero until Tristan came forth. On an island off the Cornish coast Tristan and Morolt met. When Tristan on his arrival saw Morolt's boat he sent his own back to the sea, realising that at the end of the deadly combat only one boat would be needed. You know of his victory, of Morolt's death, of Tristan's poisoned wound that only one woman in the world could heal. But to find health he would have to venture his very life, for a prize was set on the head of Morolt's murderer.

Here the life-death motif is sounded for the second time. Tristan, resigned to death, drifted in an open boat to the Irish coast, where he was brought by fishermen to the Irish Queen and her daughter. Here he was tended by the two

women who were ignorant of his identity. But the young Iseult guessed. She had kept a splinter of the sword that had killed her affianced and, when she found a piece missing in Tristan's sword, she matched the two pieces. A wave of deep resentment and hatred swept over her: sword in hand she determined to avenge her lover. But looking down on the sleeping Tristan she found herself unable to do so. So she stands over him—hesitating—a female Hamlet.

But back to Mark and his bride. I will not leave out the highly poetic passage in which the reluctant Mark stipulates that he will marry no other woman but the one whose golden hair was dropped in his court by swallows. We find this motif of the apparently impossible task before and after the Tristan legend, in many a fairy tale. In what guise Tristan reaches the Irish court, again venturing his life, here the legends vary. Some make him into a minstrel, some into a valiant knight who defeats all the other aspirants to Iseult's hand, others into a sort of Saint George killing a dragon. But when he had gained the prize he had to tell her that it was not for himself he had fought all danger, but that she was destined to become the bride of "Cornwall's tired King", as it is put much later. It is easy to imagine Iseult's feelings: the shock, the humiliation. The man whom she had hated as her lover's killer, whom she had given back to life—he is not for her. It is no wonder that her wise mother trusts Iseult's serving maid with a love potion for her daughter and the Cornish King. You know full well that Iseult and Tristan drink it. But having regard to Iseult's feelings one can only say with Shakespeare's Hamlet—and can one ever get away from him—there needs no ghost, there needs no philtre.

But again: we are here concerned with Mark. For the older legends—and I hope you will not expect me to go into the details of too many of them—I am basing myself here on Bédier, who, though writing as late as the 19th century, has welded the manifold legends into a harmonious whole. The book was crowned by the French Academy and I am using here Hilaire Belloc's very fair transcription.

My contention is that in those primitive legends, such as Eilhart, Beroul and Thomas, Mark is depicted as a cruel, ruthless and revengeful character, whereas, as time goes on, he mellows into a kind and understanding figure. But I have to admit that in almost all the legends and in Bédier's version based on them, Mark is credited with a deep affection for Tristan. It is true that there is also jealousy of the younger man and envy of his feats of arms and in any case whatever love he may bear him is turned to bitter hatred as soon as he discovers Tristan and Iseult's "treason", for we must remember that to betray a King is not simple adultery, but treason, as two of the wives of a much later King had reason to regret and to pay for with their lives.

When Mark discovers the couple's crime he condemns Tristan to the rack and Iseult to the pyre. But the providence that watches over lovers provides Tristan with a ruse which enables him to escape from a chapel in which he was allowed to offer up a last prayer. His argument that the chapel has only one door by which he must enter and leave is accepted—nobody considers the window. Iseult is claimed by the leader of the lepers who puts it to Mark that, though burning may be a painful death, it is only one death, whereas being delivered up to the lepers will make her die a thousand. This appeals to the cruelty in Mark. She is triumphantly led off by the lepers—only to be rescued by Tristan who has escaped his judges. Now begins for the lovers the blissful and yet dolorous time of their life in the woods, exposed to poverty and harsh weather, until Mark finds Iseult and restores her to her former position, banishing Tristan forever from Cornwall.

Tristan tries to forget Iseult in foreign lands. In Brittany he finds another Iseult, she of the white hands and, as the poet puts it: *Isolden hab' ich vlorn, Isolden hab' ich wider vunden.* But the magic of the name wears thin, he returns to the only woman he has ever loved, braving Mark's wrath. This time he comes disguised as a fool, changing his name, playing with it, in the way children do, throwing it up in the air, juggling with it, until it comes back to him in a dif-

ferent shape, as Tantris. This is as a late German poet puts it. As to his madness it is hardly feigned. The Queen is disgusted and yet attracted when she has to listen to things that only she and Tristan can know.

And what of Mark? Can we really suppose that he does not know—though perhaps only with one part of his mind—what the fool is driving at? His behaviour would lead us to think so and also that he enjoys the show: the free confession of Tristan's love, the Queen's fear and disgust. He holds her back by her ermine cloak and forces her to listen and, so Bédier tells us, when the King has had his fill of the fool (and we may add of the lovers' suffering) he calls for his falcons and departs for the chase.

We now come to the last act of the tragedy: Tristan's death. Again mortally wounded in battle he longs for the only one who can give him life; not his spurned wife, but the only woman he ever loved. What Iseult the Fair stands for in this connection is not hard to guess. The sick motherless hero, brought back to life by a woman whom he is not allowed to possess, who belongs to another, a father, yet one he can never cease to need and want. So he sends for her, waiting in mortal anguish for the white sail to appear.

We know that Iseult follows his call, that in one version she comes too late, in another that the jealous wife tells of a black sail instead of a white and how Tristan turns his head to the wall and gives up. Eros, in many of the old legends depicted as the genius of death with a reversed torch, has indeed turned into Thanatos here.

And how does Mark take the defection of the lovers? How does he react to the Queen's flight over the sea? Bédier tells us little about it. He credits the King with a recognition of their love, he tells us of his building two magnificent graves over their bodies, but when two briars spring up and intertwine he has them cut down thrice, thereby denying their love and displaying his hatred. It is only when they grow a fourth time that he resigns himself to his fate of having lost both and for ever.

So far for the old legends. I now propose to show you

in a few examples how later poets deal with the figure of Mark. In the two I am considering next my thesis of Mark mellowing into kindness still holds good. Swinburne gives us a not uninteresting description of King Mark's appearance:

A swart, lean man, but kinglike, still of guise
With black-streaked beard and cold unquiet eyes,
Close-mouthed, gaunt-cheeked.

He paints him as on the whole understanding, benevolent, grieving bitterly over the cruel fate that befalls the lovers: "Loud like a child upon them wept King Mark."

I will now turn to the most famous treatment of all Tristan versions, to Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*.

To those of you who are not musicians it may be new and interesting to be told that Wagner, turning away from the tremendous task of the Ring, conceived of Tristan as of a pot-boiler, calling the legend in a letter to Liszt "the simplest and yet most full-blooded love story". But, in the words of Thomas Mann, 'one cannot make oneself smaller than one is' and Wagner himself soon recognised "how", to quote his own words "everything is psychical and how deceptive is all that falls under the category of the conscious". I need hardly remind you that here also the themes of love and death are interwoven and I am only mentioning it in order to quote another word of that great genius who when talking of his *Tristan* to Cosima at the age of seventy said: "With the black flag which floats at the end of it, I shall cover myself to die".

When Wagner's Mark is brought face to face with the betrayal of his wife and the man he has loved more than any other, his whole grief and disappointment turns on Tristan. It was Tristan in whom all the virtue, the trust, the preciousness of life resided. His wound was dealt him by Tristan, his sorrow, his slighted love turn towards him. Now that Tristan has failed him there is no virtue, no love, no faith in the world. Isolde was a gift from Tristan, now that gift is defiled and not worth having. Tristan had softened the old man's heart by giving him a bride and into that soft-

ened tender heart he has now driven the spear of betrayal. "Why to me this hell, this disgrace, this sorrow from which I can never recover?" so asks the stricken old man. And in the most moving passage of this heartrending drama Tristan answers: *Das, König, kann ich Dir nicht sagen, Und was Du fragst, Du kannst es nie erfahren*".

And yet, faced with the end of all his happiness, with the betrayal not only of Tristan's love, but also with his death, which is taken as a betrayal, Mark rises to his full stature. His nobility wins a victory over his hate. Or perhaps he is unable to bear the whole truth and takes rescue in what for him is a truth, the inevitability of fate. When he learns that the lovers have drunk the potion they become to him guiltless. And now we know why Wagner adhered to the worn-out conception of the philtre, for only in that way can Mark forgive the lovers, become the benevolent, forgiving, noble figure into which Wagner wanted to make him.

I am not unaware of the unconscious significance of the love potion, of all it must have meant in the old legends, guessed at unconsciously and so firmly believed in, and perhaps less dimly conceived in the newer versions. But I shall leave it to the discussion to go into that aspect of the story.

Nor am I ignorant of what it means to discuss Wagner's opera without reference to his music; it is indeed playing Hamlet without the Prince. But again, connecting the two mediums must be left to more competent hands than mine.

It has been pointed out to me that in this connection I should refer to an event in Wagner's life, namely his relationship with Mathilde v. Wesendonck, as it was during his affair with her that *Tristan* was conceived, written and composed. However, I can see nothing in Wagner that would point to his having been Mark. Perhaps some time you will allow me to read a paper on the two lovers and then I might refer to Wagner who seems to me the *Tristan* of the piece, poor Otto v. Wesendonck being the *Mark*, and a noble *Mark* at that.

In this context, speaking of the sublimation of *Mark's*

feelings, I shall have to mention one more poet who, though very old, is still among the living. This is John Masefield. I only want to mention here that he gives us a Mark, not only forgiving and understanding, but a truly idealised figure. He even furnishes him with youth, gentleness and justice. Brangwyn who has drunk the despised cup and adores Mark after taking Isolde's place in his bed, calls him "the noblest, gentlest King" and even Isolt says that "sorrow ennobled him" and that indeed he is greater than Tristan. So she has the returned Tristan flogged within an inch of his life.

Masefield makes Mark a contemporary of Arthur and all his resentful and evil traits are projected on to Arthur. It is Arthur who banishes Tristan, threatening him with death should he return. Mark goes to battle with Arthur's forces and is killed.

Now, if I have tried to show that with the passage of time King Mark has become a mild, understanding and forgiving character, then, ladies and gentlemen, I have failed. For it remains to talk of two poets, both writing in their maturity or even old age, who show us a very different Mark. The first of these is Lord Tennyson who in one chapter of his Idylls of the King, called the Last Tournament, written when Tennyson was fifty, retells the story. There is indeed no love lost between Mark and Tristan or between Mark and Isolt. When she welcomes Tristan "with her white embrace" she speaks of Mark thus:

Catlike through his own easle steals my Mark
.....

Who hates thee as I him — ev'n to the death.
I felt my hatred for King Mark
Quicken within me.

And she tells Tristan that Mark, who, had he not been afraid of him, had "beaten, scratched, bitten, marred me somehow" and warns him not to eat or drink with Mark, nor ride through the woods with his visor up lest an arrow from behind a bush leave her "all alone with Mark and hell". She tells Tristan in what way Mark informed her of his marriage to the other Isolt, how he suddenly stood behind her "in

fuming sulphur, blue and green, a fiend," and hissed the news at her.

And it is in the same way, suddenly appearing behind the lovers, just when Tristan's lips had touched "her jewelled throat", that King Mark kills his hated rival.

The other poet who defeats my theory is old Hardy and when I say "old Hardy" I mean that he wrote his play: *The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall*" at the age of eighty-three. How the theme must have haunted him, for when he was but thirty he wrote the lovely poem: When I set out for Lyonesse, Lyonesse being the mythical kingdom of Tristan's, west of the Isles of Scilly which the sea swallowed. So off and on for over fifty years he must have thought of the legend and indeed he presents a highly original version of it. He goes back both in content and form to old models, older yet than the legends, for he introduces the Chanters, a king of Greek Chorus. And he is original even in his stage directions. So he insists on the word "fair" meaning nothing but "beautiful" and directs that his Iseult should be dark-haired. I must reluctantly admit that Tennyson does the same, giving her "blue-black hair and Irish eyes"; we cannot know whether Hardy read Tennyson or conceived of his Iseult originally. Philologically this interpretation is as doubtful as it is psychologically. For the word fair in the sense of beautiful was derived from the conception of fair-haired, which was considered and perhaps still is, as superior to dark-haired beauty.

How does Hardy see his Mark? He conceives him as a drunken brute, loving nothing and nobody, fond only of his wine and the hunt. His only feeling for Iseult is one of fierce possessiveness. He vents his spite on Iseult's little dog, knowing full well that this, a present from Tristan, would mean much to her. The Chanters sum up his feelings for Tristan: "Slight was King Mark's love for Tristan". He sent him to Ireland "not Iseult to gain, But truly to be slain".

In his absence Iseult has a ship furnished and sails to Brittany to her sick lover. But the weather is against her and she must return without seeing Tristan, fearing the

King's wrath should he find her absent. Mark is suspicious; he heard that she had been away, where? "A puffin told him" she had been to Brittany. In vain Iseult assures him that "death darkens Tristan," for so she had been told by his wife, but when Mark, who had seen Tristan die too many deaths, disbelieves her, she wonders what Mark knows, he "who always grinned with gall at Tristan's renown". And so the tragedy moves to its inevitable end. While the King carouses the lovers meet, unaware of their being watched by him from the gallery. Mark comes down in a drunken fury and kills Tristan, stabbing him in the back.

And now we find an interesting reversal of the situation in Wagner. It is not Mark who reproaches Tristan with his ill-deeds, it is Tristan who accuses Mark of ingratitude. After all he had done for him, fighting his battles for him, winning him a bride, trying in banishment to forget Iseult, this is the treatment meted out to him. And it is Mark who hangs his head in shame.

And now I want to quote to you one sentence of Bédier which, I hope, I have taken and am taking to heart. "My Lords, a teller that would please should not stretch his tale too long and truly this tale is so various and high that it needs no straining".

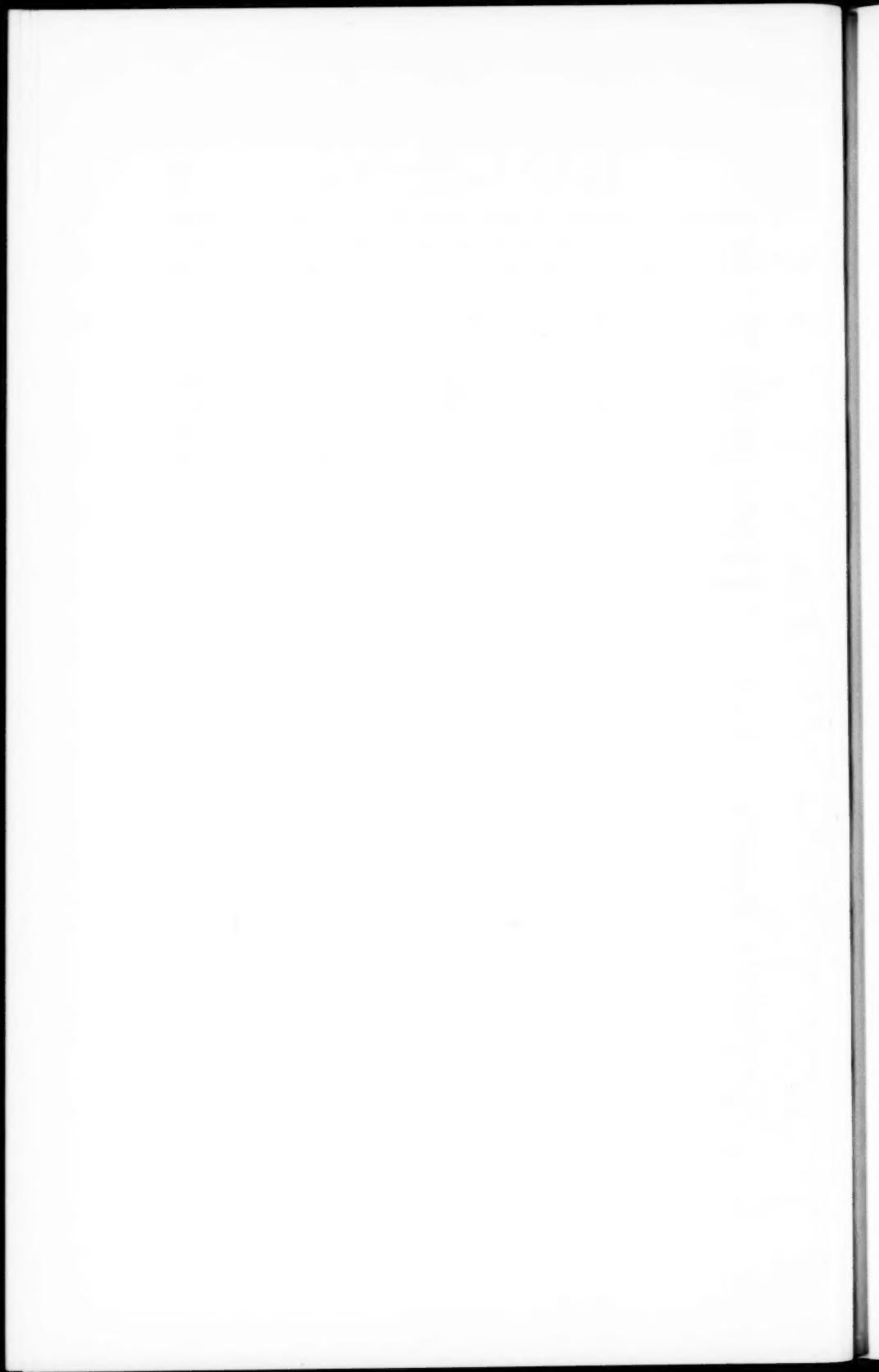
So I hurry to my end and to the beginning, namely my title. This title: King Mark disguised as Himself was inspired by a contribution of my husband's which you can find in our Journal as early as 1921*. Here he speaks of people appearing in a dream; they are people belonging to the family pattern, usually the parents. But all the associations point to other, less familiar, farther removed people, such as an uncle or a mother-in-law. Yet on analysing more deeply it is found that the less closely related persons bear the characteristics of the former, the parental ones, thereby confirming the well-known tenets of analytical interpretation.

Now let me apply this interpretation to my story. Then

*Ernest Jones: People in Dreams disguised as themselves. Intern. Journ. of Psychoanalysis, 1921

the original Mark of the old legends and the late one in which the poet goes back to them would appear to the dreamer—for what else is a poet but a dreamer?—as the parent. But all the subsequent associations point to another Mark, a milder, kinder, better person perhaps not a father, but as he is indeed in the story an uncle, and for once not the wicked uncle, but a loved and loving one. This would be the stage Wagner, Swinburne and Masefield reached. But Tennyson and Hardy tear off the various disguises and show us—whom? I think the real Mark. But there I am only guessing. I hope you will answer this question for me.

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Incest In The Brothers Karamazov

by

Harry Slochower, Ph.D.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Mitya publicly competes with his father for Grushenka. And Dostoyevsky criticism has accepted Grushenka as the incest figure in the novel. However, the main plot of the story and Mitya's major inner dilemma center, not in Grushenka, but in another woman: Katerina or Katya. And this essay will attempt to show that Katya is the deeper of Mitya's incest burdens. The paper would also suggest that although Freud's study of Dostoyevsky never mentions Katya, she appears there in a veiled form.

Freud names *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Hamlet* and *Oedipus Rex* three literary masterpieces, dealing with patricide, motivated by sexual rivalry. He regards three of Fyodor Karamazov's sons guilty of patricide and sees Grushenka as the object of the sexual contest between Fyodor and Mitya.¹

Now, *The Brothers Karamazov* is a later, more complex form of the oedipal situation than are *Oedipus Rex* and *Hamlet*. In Sophocles, Oedipus actually commits incest and patricide. Shakespeare's modern, sophisticated scene presents more tangled relations. There is a screen in Hamlet's mind between his father and Claudius, between his mother and

1. Mitya, in particular, can be likened to Oedipus and Hamlet in that his character spells his fate. He too is more intent on uncovering the truth than is anyone else. In doing so, he likewise arouses suspicion against himself and contributes most to his condemnation. - Father Zossima's act of kneeling before Mitya (seen by a member of his order as the elder's sensing that Mitya is contemplating the murder of his father) is a kind of warning, such as the oracle gives Sophocles' Oedipus. Mitya's celebration with Grushenka at Mokroe (it is their "wedding") takes place after his near-attempt to kill Fyodor and after he thought he had killed Grigory.

Ophelia and between himself, as the son, and Gonzago "the nephew" (in the play between the play).² In Dostoyevsky, the pattern becomes still more intricate. We have three father figures: Fyodor Karamazov, Grigory (who brings up Mitya and Smerdyakov) and Father Zossima; three or four sons: Mitya, Ivan, Alyosha and Smerdyakov, who divide the patricidal guilt. But most complex of all is the problem of incest. Grushenka is the manifest object of Mitya's desire. The hidden and more troublesome incest-figure is Katya.

Katya is pivotal not only for the plot. She is also the source of Mitya's obsessive feeling of his 'debt' to her. His inability to return the money he took from Katya is the chief ground of his emotional disturbance. This is the reason, Mitya says, 'why I fought in the tavern, that is why I attacked my father.' Here, Mitya associates his patricidal impulse with his 'debt' to Katya. What tortures him when he is arrested is not the false charge that he murdered his father, nor so much the thought that he killed Grigory, but 'the damned consciousness' that he had not repaid Katya and had become 'a downright thief.' (In passing, we might note that Mitya recalls that as a boy he stole twenty kopecks from his mother which he returned three days later) (430). Why does Mitya feel that this is 'the most shameful act of my whole life,' that his very 'life' depends on his returning the 3000 rubles to Katya? (523, 720).³

Katya as Mother Image

Dostoyevsky gives Katya features which he also assigns to Mitya's mother, Adelaida. Both belong to a fairly rich and distinguished family and become heiresses. Both possess an imperious beauty and are described as strong, vigorous and intelligent. Mitya's mother was 'a hot-tempered, bold,

2. For a psychoanalytic interpretation of Oedipus and Hamlet along these lines see my essays "Oedipus: Fromm or Freud" (*Complex*, Spring 1952) and "Shakespeare's Hamlet. The Myth of Renaissance Sensibility" (*American Imago*, vol. 7, No. 3).
3. The numbers refer to pages in the Modern Library Giant edition of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

dark-browed, impatient woman,' and according to rumor used to beat her husband. She left Fyodor, running away with a divinity student. Katya strikes Mitya as proud, reckless, defiant, self-willed. She too defies convention: She comes to Mitya alone, impulsively offers to become his wife.

From the outset, Katya appears to Mitya as 'a person of character.' Indeed, he speaks of her as a kind of goddess. At the meeting in Father Zossima's cell, he is particularly outraged by his father's aspersions of Katya's good and honorable name for whom Mitya feels 'such reverence that I dare not take her name in vain.' (72) (We are told that there were everlasting scenes between Fyodor and Mitya's mother and that after Adelaida left her husband, "Fyodor Pavlovitch introduced a regular harem into the house"). And just as the question is raised how Adelaida could have married 'such a worthless puny weakling' as Fyodor, so Mitya cannot understand that Katya should choose 'a bug' like himself (5).

Mitya comes to Katya's attention by his wild exploits which set the whole town talking. He felt that this made him 'a hero.' But, he complains, Katya 'didn't seem to feel it.' When she first saw him, she 'scarcely looked at me, and compressed her lips scornfully.' (Mitya's mother abandoned him when he was three years old and apparently never "looked" at him afterwards.) Thereupon, Mitya plans revenge on Katya by humiliating her. The opportunity comes when disgrace threatens Katya's father (a Lieutenant-Colonel), who is suspected of irregularities in connection with an apparent deficit of 4500 rubles of government money which is held in his account. Katya, desperately trying to save her father from dishonor, gets word from Mitya that he will give her the money if she came to him alone, Mitya promising 'to keep the secret religiously.'

When Katya came to him, Mitya's first thought 'was a - Karamazov one,' to treat this 'beauty' as a prostitute. But, she also appeared to him beautiful 'in another way . . . because she was noble . . . in all the grandeur of her generosity and sacrifice for her father.' In contrast, Mitya

thought of himself as a little animal, 'a bug . . . a venomous spider.' His feelings towards her comprised a mixture of hatred and love. His hatred for Katya, he tells Alyosha, was such as he never felt for any other woman. But, it is the kind 'which is only a hair's-breadth from love, the maddest love.'

Katya's visit aroused a powerful sexual desire in Mitya. He was so excited by the 'venomous thought' of possessing her that he nearly swooned 'with suspense.' Although Mitya gained mastery over his demon, his deep guilt begins at this point. It is as though by offering herself to him, Katya divined his hidden wish to enter into an impermissible relation with her. But Mitya curbed his desire, gave Katya the money (we should bear in mind that it is the money left him by his mother). After she leaves, Mitya drew his sword, nearly stabbing himself - 'why, I don't know,' he adds (115, 117-8). Mitya's ability to control his Karamazov sensuality in this scene is a major test of his manhood and *fore-shadows that he will resist the other temptation, that of killing his father.* He was held back from taking Katya by - perhaps also despite - the thought that she was ready to surrender herself for the sake of her father.

However, soon afterwards, Mitya yielded to another enticement. He took the 3000 rubles which Katya asked him to post and spent half of the sum on his mistress-figure, Grushenka (repeating his father's act in which Fyodor attempted to keep the dowry of Mitya's mother). At about the same time, he agreed to Katya's proposal or demand that they become engaged. (How this comes about, Dostoyevsky-Mitya does not make clear).

The engagement takes place shortly after the incident in Mitya's room and immediately following the death of Katya's father. She offers to become Mitya's wife to save him from himself:

'I love you madly,' she writes him, 'even if you don't love me, never mind. Be my husband. Don't be afraid. I won't hamper you in any way. I will be your chattel. I will be

the carpet under your feet. I want to love you for ever. I want to save you from yourself' (120-1)⁴

Mitya makes a form of resistance, writing Katya that she is now rich (having become an heiress on her father's death), whereas he was 'only a stuck-up beggar.' For some unexplained reason, Mitya sends his brother Ivan to her who thereupon falls in love with Katya. This 'one stupid thing,' he says later to Alyosha, 'may be the saving of us all now.'⁵

Katya as the Possessive Mother

The identification of Katya with Mitya's mother lies above all in their attempt to dominate their men. Katya's authoritative character is suggested first by her outward appearance. Alyosha is struck 'by the imperiousness, proud ease, and self-confidence of the haughty girl.' Her love for Mitya is that of a commanding or pitying mother for a wayward son. She would be Mitya's 'God,' as she says. When Alyosha tells her that Mitya sends her his 'compliments' (his manner of letting Katya know that their betrothal is off), she retorts:

'No, he won't recognize that I am his truest friend; he won't know me, and looks on me merely as a woman. . . . Let him feel ashamed of himself, let him be ashamed of other people's knowing (that he had not returned the money he owed her), but not of my knowing. He can tell God everything without shame. . . I want to save him for ever. Let him forget me as his betrothed.'

The Pan-Slavic Mother Goddess is worshipped for her fruit-bearing and yielding qualities, not for her beauty. She

4. Dostoyevsky offers but scanty material for the motivation of Katya's humiliating herself before Mitya whom she regarded as a profligate and gambler. He does suggest some identification between Katya's father and Mitya. Both were lieutenants, are in disgrace and "gamble" away their honor and that of the family. Katya conceives her role to be that of saving both, first her father and later Mitya.
5. A related "strategy" occurs in Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* where Leverkühn sends a friend to woo Marie, whereupon the friend and Marie fall in love with each other.

is generally identified with the good Russian earth and its earthy peasant folk. Katya, with her aristocratic pride, stern virtue and possessiveness is a distortion of this Eastern Mother Goddess. She can not produce because she cannot yield.

At one point, Katya seems almost ready to accept the role of Mitya's 'friend' and 'sister.' When told that Mitya has gone to Grushenka, she exclaims:

'I've already decided, even if he marries that - creature . . . even then I will not abandon him . . . I will watch over him all my life unceasingly. When he becomes unhappy with that woman, and that is bound to happen quite soon, let him come to me and he will find a friend, a sister. . . Only a sister, of course, and so for ever; but he will learn at least that that sister is really his sister, who loves him and has sacrificed all her life to him.'

Yet, in the same breath, she reverts to the tyrannical nature of her love:

'I will gain my point. I will insist on his knowing me and confiding entirely in me, without reserve,' she cried, in a sort of frenzy, 'I will be a god to whom he can pray!'

At the trial, she relates the humiliating errand on which she came to Mitya. And the author comments that such self-immolation seemed incredible even 'from such a self-willed and contemptuously proud girl, as she was.' She herself confesses at the trial: 'I tried to conquer him by my love . . .' (151, 153, 194-6, 722, 731).⁶

Katya offers to sacrifice herself for Mitya. But she would impose her sacrifice on him, *would be his Mother-Saviour by command.*⁷ Mitya senses this. He calls Katya 'a woman of great wrath . . . Hard-headed creature,' realizes that 'she loves her own *virtue*, not me,' that she wants

6. Katya would also impose her will on Grushenka. She invites the rival to her house and would have her be 'an angel' who will give up Mitya because that is best for him. - Alyosha feels that Katya has fastened on Mitya because 'a character like Katerina Ivanovna's must dominate, and she could dominate some one like Dmitry, and never a man like Ivan' (153-5, 161-2, 193)

'to sacrifice her life and destiny out of gratitude,' that her love for him is 'more like revenge.' The revenge consists in Katya's attempt to reform him, that is, to deprive him of the 'bug' in himself which he enjoys. It is the threat of the mother engulfing the son by her all-possessive love.

Mitya keeps speaking of his 'debt' to Katya and of his 'disgrace.' On the manifest level, he is referring to the fact that he had squandered 1500 of Katya's 3000 rubles on a spree with Grushenka. At first, he heatedly resists revealing this fact:

'I won't speak of that gentleman,' he says at the trial, 'because it would be a stain on my honour. The answer to the question where I got the money would expose me to far greater disgrace than the murder and robbing of my father, if I had murdered him.'

When pressed, he reveals his 'shame,' stating that he stole the money, not from his father, 'but from her . . . a noble creature, noblest of the noble.' But, 'she has hated me ever so long, oh, ever so long . . . and hated me with good reason, good reason!' The 'good reason' is that he asked her to come alone knowing that she was aware of and despised his debaucheries. Even after his engagement to her, Mitya was unable to curb his dissipations, indeed, carried them on 'before the very eyes of his betrothed!' The 'tragedy' of it, he adds, is that 'these lofty sentiments of hers are as sincere as a heavenly angel's.' But Mitya did not want to reform. He would rather vanish into 'his filthy back-alley, where he is at home and where he will sink in

7. In this sense, there is something to the point made in Komarowitsch's *Die Urgestalt der Brüder Karamasoff* (München 1928) that Katya's love demands the same unlimited subservience as the Grand Inquisitor's. Komarowitsch refers to Dostoyevsky's comment in his Notebooks: 'Katya: Rome, unique objet de mon ressentiment.' The line is taken from Corneille's *Horace* and is spoken by a heroine who curses her native land. - Incidentally, Grusha calls Katya "mother" (in a derogatory sense). Garnett regrettably translates the Russian word "matj" as 'my girl' (812).

filth and stench at his own free will and with enjoyment' (121, 122).

Mitya makes desperate efforts to free himself from the 'debt' to his surrogate 'God'-mother. This, although Katya herself does not press him for the money, indeed, acts as if she did not care what he did with it. Furthermore, Mitya *could* get the money: Alyosha offers him 2000 rubles and says that Ivan would give him another 1000. Moreover, he could borrow from Grusha. But no! Mitya is obsessed with the feeling that *he can rid of his 'debt' to Katya only by giving her the money which he has inherited from his mother and which his father is withholding from him.* (Mitya's attempts to get the money from Samsonov, Lyagavy, Madame Hohlakov are a wild goose chase which invite failure.) And he wants no more than 3000 rubles, although by his reckoning, his mother left him 28,000 rubles. If his father would give him 3000 rubles, Mitya tells Alyosha, he would draw his soul 'out of hell:'

'Let him give me back only three out of the twenty-eight thousand... For that three thousand - I give you my solemn word - I'll make an end of everything, and he shall hear nothing more of me. For the last time, I give him the chance to be a father.'⁸ (509, 720, 124-5)

Grushenka: The Hetaira-Magdalene

From this perspective, Grushenka is the lighter of Mitya's burdens. The conflict with his father over her is open

8. The number 3 is a leading "motif" in *The Brothers Karamazov* as it is in the Oedipus dramas, the *Divine Comedy*, *Don Quixote*, *Faust* and other mythopoeisis. In Dostoyevsky's novel, it has a diabolic sign (the violence of the 3 brothers, the abandonment of Mitya when he was 3 years old, the 3000 rubles, the 3 blows with which Smerdyakov kills Fyodor, Ivan's 3 interviews with Smerdyakov and the devil's 3 visits with Ivan); and its resurrectory sign, his 3 ordeals, his arrest on the 3rd day of his struggle to save himself.)
9. As Fyodor would buy Grusha with 3000 rubles, so Mitya offers the Pole 3000 rubles if he would release her. - Grusha herself is at first attracted to or binds herself to father-figures: Samsonov, the Pole and Fyodor, whom she does not discourage at first.

and somewhat literal.⁹ Mitya is ready to accept all his rivals, except Fyodor. He is not jealous of the old merchant Samsonov, nor of the Pole who, Mitya declares, has priority because he was her 'first lover.' It is of some significance that Mitya's attitude towards Grushenka is a transference of Katya's to him. As Katya was willing to accept any conditions if Mitya would agree to be her husband, so he declares:

'I'll be her (Grusha's) husband if she deigns to have me, and when lovers come, I'll go into the next room. I'll clean her friends' goloshes, blow up their samovar, run their errands.' (124)

However, Mitya does not want to force his love on Grusha. And, it is his hope that she may be the means by which he can free himself from Katya. Her soft, voluptuous, noiseless movements contrast with Katya's bold and vigorous step, her simple 'child-like good nature' with Katya's complex ironic consciousness.

Mitya speaks of Grusha's 'infernal curves.' Yet, the story does not have a single erotic scene between them. Even at his "wedding" with Grusha at Mokroe, Mitya does not go beyond kissing his beloved (154-5, 630). Dostoyevsky himself remarks that Grusha is Russian in that her beauty is only of the moment. Russian literature, as Berdyaev notes, does not know the erotic motifs of the West. It has no stories comparable to Tristan and Isolde or Romeo and Juliet. The attraction of Russian women (as of the Russian Mother Goddess) lies not in their seductiveness but in their earthy productivity.

Mitya's meeting with Grushenka at Mokroe is the poem of *The Brothers Karamazov*, the lovers' Dionysian song to life. For the first and only time, the two are united, at one with "the people," the Russian peasants, over whom they reign as King and Queen. It is their Eden where all is love, kindness, forgiveness and generosity. To the rhythm of children's songs, Mitya and his bride themselves act like children. Everything - down to the language and mood - is simple, elemental and earthy. Here, all are equal (except

for the "foreigners," the Poles, who leave before the high point of the revel is reached).

But it is a Karamazov-Eden, and the celebration takes on the character of a delirious orgy. Mokroe is the scene of Mitya's and Grushenka's "wedding." It takes place at about the same time when the father is murdered and after Mitya thought he may have killed his surrogate-father Grigory. At this point, "society" steps in and arrests Mitya.

Like many of Dostoyevsky's women, Grushenka turns from the hetaira to the Madonna. Her transformation begins during Alyosha's visit when his kindness frees her for a generous, overflowing love of the 'soul,' becoming 'more loving than we,' as Alyosha puts it. The change takes on a stable form after Mitya's arrest. Now, there were

'signs of a spiritual transformation in her, and a steadfast, fine and humble determination that nothing could shake... There was scarcely a trace of her former frivolity.'

Through Grusha's love, Mitya declares, he has 'become a man himself' (372-3, 597, 630).

Mitya's Need of the Two Women

Although Mitya states that Grusha has made 'a man' of him, it appears that she does not completely fulfill his needs. She is the permissive figure who *accepts Mitya as he is*. But Mitya also needs the authoritative, censorious conscience, especially since his father lacks this quality altogether. Fyodor is a Satyr-figure, embodies an amorphous, chaotic sensualism intent solely on the pursuit of pleasure. And Mitya has only a distant relation to Father Zossima, Alyosha and Ivan, the religious and rational super-egos in the novel.

This may explain why Mitya cannot and does not want to free himself from Katya, why he kneels and prays 'to Katya's image' in Grusha's presence (162). When she produces the letter which virtually condemns him, Mitya cries out:

'We've hated each other for many things, Katya, but I swear, I swear I loved you even while I hated you, and you didn't love me!'¹⁰

When, at the trial, Katya tells of her visit to Mitya and her bow to him, Mitya sobs: ‘“Katya, why have you ruined me? . . . Now, I am condemned’” (723). Does her recital reactivate his incestuous desire for her? Does her attempt to save him again put him in her ‘debt?’¹¹

Even as Mitya turns towards Grushenka, he remains bound to Katya. Following the trial, he seems concerned only about seeing Katya. Alyosha tells her:

‘He needs you particularly just now . . . he keeps asking for you. . . He realizes that he has injured you beyond reckoning. . . He said, if she refuses to come, I shall be unhappy all my life.’

When Katya appears in the doorway of his prison cell,

‘a scared look came into his face. He turned pale, but a timid, pleading smile appeared on his lips at once, and with an irresistible impulse he held out both hands to Katya.’

And now, the two confess their mutual tie. Katya tells him:

‘Love is over, Mitya! but the past is painfully dear to me. . . I shall love you for ever, and you will love me; do you know that? Do you hear? Love me, love me all your life! she cried, with a quiver almost of menace in her voice.’

Mitya replies:

‘I shall love you. . . All my life! So it will be, so it will always be. . .’

- 10. Mitya himself is not aware of his complex involvement with Katya. She is, indeed, the great ‘secret’ of his life and of the novel. She comes to Mitya secretly, asks him to send off the 3000 rubles secretly; Mitya would keep the fact secret that he spent half of her money on Grushenka. Above all, the nature of his ‘debt’ to Katya is Mitya’s ‘great secret’ and ‘disgrace.’
- 11. Earlier Mitya declared that what he wants is ‘to have done with her and with father.’ It seems to Mitya that he could be freed from Fyodor if his father returned the heritage his mother left him. Would Mitya be getting his “mother” back from father in this way and thus be liberated from the temptation to kill him? And would he be released from the ‘debt’ to the surrogate mother by giving her his own mother’s money?

He pleads with her that she forgive him for having wanted to humiliate her, for his desire to have 'the proud aristocratic girl' appear as 'the hetaira.' His plea is met in Katya's final resignation, in her words to the rival Grushenka: 'Forgive me . . . Don't be anxious, I'll save him for you' (804-5, 810-12).

In his book *Hamlet and Oedipus*, Ernest Jones gives examples of the mythic process of decomposition in which the tyrannical figure is broken up into several characters, some of whom may be veiled as beneficent. Applying this strategy, one may say that Dostoyevsky-Mitya divide the mother-figure into Katya and Grushenka. The decomposition may be due to Mitya's repressed feelings about his own mother who was apparently unconcerned about abandoning him when she left Fyodor. Mitya moves from the commanding goddess-mother to the yielding mistress-mother. In the end, he needs both: 'the proud aristocratic girl and the "hetaira". Grusha can only follow, but not guide. He needs both, moreover, for the mixture of elements in each. Grusha is submissive. Yet, in the scene with Katya, Mitya recognizes in her 'the queen of all she-devils.' Katya is defiant, haughty and domineering. Yet, Alyosha notes that her face can beam 'with spontaneous good-natured kindliness, and direct warm-hearted sincerity' (698, 161, 153). She would be Mitya's 'God,' but is also ready to sacrifice herself to help him. In the end, the two women-figures tends to merge.

Mitya almost marries Katya and nearly kills Fyodor. Like Hamlet, he wrestles with the demon driving him to violate the primary taboos. Mitya too shows no hesitation to "act," except where it concerns Katya and Fyodor. His promise lies in his gradual awareness of the nature of his 'debt' and guilt, awareness that his involvement with Katya was injurious to her and himself.

Freud's Analysis of a Katya-Figure in Zweig's Story

In his essay "Dostoevski and Parricide" (*Collected Papers*, vol. V), Freud does not refer to Katya at all. And, while he does not mention Grushenka by name, he is clearly

referring to her when he writes that, in Mitya's case, "the motive of sexual rivalry (with his father) is openly admitted."

That the master of the oedipal analysis should have missed the major incest figure in the novel seemed incredible to me. Careful scrutiny discloses, however, that Freud after all does "analyze" Katya. But he does so "unconsciously:" This analysis appears in Freud's discussion of Stefan Zweig's story "Four-and-Twenty Hours in a Woman's Life," which he inserts in his essay on Dostoyevsky. His manifest purpose here is to illuminate Dostoyevsky's gambling mania and its connection with the novelist's onanistic burden. But, what Freud says about the woman in Zweig's story applies - with some allowance for digressive "free association" - to Dostoyevsky's Katya.

Theodor Reik, in his essay on Freud's "Study on Dostoyevsky," pays tribute to his "original insight into the life and creation of the great novelist," making only some minor criticisms. One of these is that Freud's summary of Zweig's story is too long. "We cannot help feeling," Reik observes, that Freud's long digression is "an error in proportion" (*From Thirty Years With Freud*, N.Y. 1940). In a letter (cited in Reik's essay), Freud grants "that the parenthetical Zweig analysis disturbs the balance." Yet, - as though Freud sensed that this digression was somehow relevant - he continues: "If we look deeper, we can probably find what was the purpose for its addition." Freud's discussion is "an error in proportion," if we limit ourselves to his avowed intention. But, if as Freud suggests, "we look deeper," that is, if we examine it for clues to Freud's unconscious "purpose," it is not at all too long, but not long enough, is not "parenthetical," but central.

Freud summarizes the Zweig story in the following way:

An elderly lady of distinction tells of an experience she had more than twenty years earlier. "She had been left a widow when still young and is the mother of two sons, who no longer need her." In the gambling rooms of Monte Carlo, into which she wanders aimlessly, she is attracted by the hands of an unlucky gambler, who evidently leaves the gam-

bling rooms in the depths of despair, with the evident intention of ending his hopeless life.

"An inexplicable feeling of sympathy compels her to follow him and make every effort to save him . . . she . . . finds herself obliged, in the most natural way possible, to join him in his apartment at the hotel, and finally to share his bed." She "exacts a most solemn vow from the young man . . . that he will never play again, provides him with money for his journey home . . . is ready to sacrifice all she has in order to keep him." But instead, "the faithless youth had gone back to his play. She reminds him of his promise, but, obsessed by his passion, he calls her a spoil-sport, tells her to go and flings back the money with which she had tried to rescue him. She hurries away in deep mortification and learns later that she has not succeeded in saving him from suicide."

Transposed into the relationship between Katya and Dmitry:

Katya's father dies while she is still young. She tries to be a mother to two of Fyodor's sons, Mitya and Ivan, neither of whom "need her." Katya learns that Mitya has been leading a "gambling" life and that he is in despair. After the death of her father (who is analogous to the woman's husband in the Zweig account), she comes to Mitya's room. She does not share his bed, except in Mitya's phantasy and perhaps also in her own. Katya attaches herself to him, gets his promise to reform and gives him money, expressing her readiness to sacrifice everything to save him. But, here too, the hero surmises the woman's actual motivation and goes back to his "play." He is now seized with the obsession to return the money to her, who would interfere with his gambling life. At the end, Katya learns that she did not succeed in saving Mitya.

In the course of his analysis of Zweig's story, Freud writes:

"The equation of the mother with the prostitute, which is made by the young man in the story . . . brings the unattainable within easy reach. The bad conscience which accompanies the phantasy brings about the unhappy ending."

The woman wants to save the young man's soul. But this is a disguised facade. To be sure,

"faithful to the memory of her husband, she has armed herself against all similar attractions; but - and here the son's fantasy is right - she did not, as a mother, escape her quite unconscious transference of love on to her son, and fate was able to catch her at this undefended spot."

Earlier, Freud speaks of

"Dostoevski's burden of guilt" which "had taken a tangible shape as a burden of debt, and he was able to take refuge

12. Freud's letter to Reik contains a sentence which is a kind of quick summation of the Katya-Mitya relation. Dostoyevsky, Freud notes, "really only understands either crude, instinctive desire or masochistic submission and love from pity."
13. There is another surprising omission in Freud's essay. As mentioned, Freud sees the patricidal guilt distributed among Mitya, Ivan and Smerdyakov, but exempts "the contrasted figure of Alyosha." To be sure, Dostoyevsky himself consciously intended to portray Alyosha as his saintly 'hero' who believes in 'active love.' However, Alyosha is at most an unheroic hero. To begin with, Dostoyevsky, the artist, draws him with less power, pours less of his artistic blood into him than he does into his criminal brothers. And this has aesthetic "justice." For Alyosha does almost nothing that affects the central problem. And he can do nothing since he loves and forgives everybody for everything. That is, *he is unable to choose* and is therefore unable to act. Furthermore, the psychology of the Saviour-figure suggests hidden guilt-feeling which extends beyond the theological ground. Alyosha constantly *invites punishment*, and like Father Zossima begs 'forgiveness.' Now, unlike Father Zossima, Alyosha has not yet sinned in his personal life, has done nothing for which he needs to atone. Does he feel guilty only because of his impotence in relation to the problem of the Karamazovs? The passage in which Alyosha begs to be forgiven offers another clue. It comes immediately following the death of his surrogate Father Zossima. In this scene, he embraces, kisses and wets the earth (the Russian "Mother-Earth" in Dostoyevsky's terminology), 'vowed passionately to live it, to love it for ever and ever.' Gazing at the coffin of the elder, 'he longed to forgive every one and for everything, and to beg forgiveness... He had fallen on the earth a weak boy, but he rose a resolute champion...' (380-1). The last point was suggested to me by Larry Goldsmith.

behind the pretext that he was trying by his winnings at the tables to make it possible for him to return to Russia without being arrested by his creditors."

Most of this applies to Mitya's relation to Katya.¹²

Freud's Martha and the Matriarchy

The question occurs: How explain Freud's omission of a central figure of the oedipal situation?¹³ The answer would probably entail a thorough analysis of Freud's life work. But perhaps some light may be thrown by considering briefly one personal factor in his life and its bearing on his anthropological outlook.

As is well known, Freud's oedipal scheme centers in the patriarchal cycle of human history. It has little to say about the matriarchy beyond noting that "the maternal inheritance is older than the paternal one" (Footnote to "The Savage's Dread of Incest" in *Totem and Taboo*). In his essay "The Heart of Freud," (Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1951), A. Bronson Feldman suggests that this may be connected with the fact that in his own life, Freud "had never experienced a mother's dictatorship." In his biography of Freud, Ernest Jones speaks of Freud's mother as "indulgent." Where "the father stood for the reality principle," Jones states, the mother stood for "the pleasure principle" (p. 7). Freud's conception of what women and mothers are or should be corresponds roughly to the 19th century German conception: the soft, giving, non-competitive figure.¹⁴ He writes to his wife:

"Nature has determined woman's destiny through beauty, charm and sweetness. Law and custom have much to give women that has been withheld from them, but the position of women will surely be what it is: in youth an adoring darling and in mature years a loved wife." (Jones, p. 176).

Now, ironically enough, we learn from Jones' account

14. Interestingly enough, in Teutonic mythology, women are distinguished, not by their beauty or softness, but by their bravery and warrior-role, e.g. the Walküre.

that Freud did experience some measure of a "mother's" dictatorship. The most prominent women in Freud's life were, aside from his mother (about whom Jones gives very little), Martha Bernays, who became his wife, and her mother. Martha's mother was the head of the family and, according to Jones, Freud found in her "too masculine an attitude." Freud himself says of her that she is "fascinating, but alien, and will always remain so to me . . . she exacts admiration" (Jones, p. 116). Freud had some bitter quarrels with this strong-willed woman and even threatened to break with Martha unless she defied her mother. Later, however, Freud got on quite good terms with the mother.

Now, Freud wanted to think that Martha was not like her mother. "If, for instance," he writes to his wife

"I imagined my gentle sweet girl as a competitor it would only end in my telling her, as I did seventeen months ago, that I am fond of her and that I implore her to withdraw from the strife into the calm uncompetitive activity of my home" (Jones, p. 176).

And again: "I seek similarities with you (and her mother), but hardly find any." (Jones, p. 116)

"Hardly any," yet some. For, referring to a photograph Martha sent him, Freud sees in her face "an almost masculine expression, so unmaidenly in its decisiveness." Jones adds that Freud was painfully to discover that "she was not at heart docile and she had a firmness of character that did not readily lend itself to being molded" (p. 102).

Actually, Freud's courtship was no simple idyll. There were years of separation; passion alternated with resentment and with torturing doubts about Martha's love for him of which Freud needed repeated reassurance. It too was at first a "secret" relationship, jeopardized by the displeasure of Martha's family. In his first letter to her, shortly before their betrothal, Freud would assure her "of a relationship which perhaps will have for long to be veiled in secrecy. How much I venture in writing that!" (Jones p. 106). Only once did Freud allow himself to express some public resent-

ment against his fiancée. This happened in connection with the Cocaine Episode in which Freud held her indirectly responsible for the delay in publishing his manuscript on cocaine. In his Autobiography, Freud would explain

“how it was the fault of my fiancée that I was not already famous at that early age . . . but I bore my fiancée no grudge for her interruption of my work.”

Jones comments that Freud's excuse is “somewhat disingenuous,” that “it does not tally very closely with the facts,” and that it “must cover a deeper explanation” (p. 79).

According to Jones, Freud thought of Martha as a truly noble character in whose presence one could not have a mean or common thought. He refers to Freud's feeling of being in “debt” to Martha:

“When he said he would be in her debt when he died he had more than one reason for his gratitude. She protected him from any kind of meanness, and he would do nothing improper or unworthy even in order to gain her in marriage” (125).

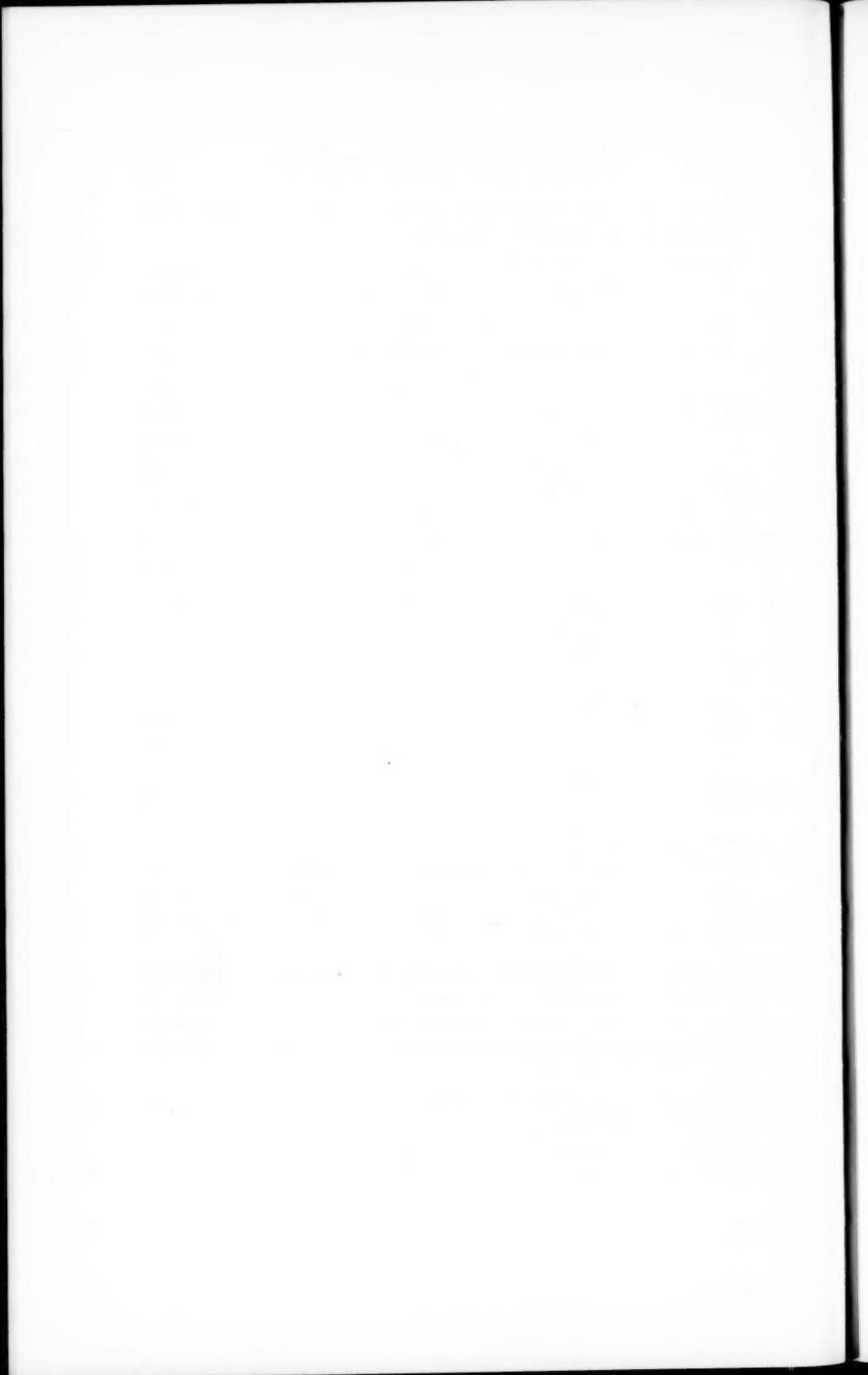
This feeling of “debt” should be considered alongside with what Jones calls Freud's “great dislike of helplessness and his love of independence.” Yet, Jones observes that “in all major personal issues,” Martha “proved stronger than Freud and held her ground.” He speaks of “a remarkable concealment in Freud's love life,” and that in his relation to Martha, Freud “often needed to express some hardness or adverse criticism before he could trust himself to release his feelings of affection” (129, 122, 124).¹⁵

However, Martha was not only “masculine.” Jones notes that “Martha's tact and sweetness,” again and again, “succeeded in smoothing things over.” Thus, it was possible for Freud to see in Martha that which he wanted: “the gentle sweet girl.” But the competitive, “masculine” strain was there, in Martha and more so, in her mother. It constituted a threat to Freud's ideal conception of woman, and he tried to keep it out of his sight. Here may be one of the roots for his failure to appreciate the historic function of the matriarchy. And here may be the explanation why

Freud did not consciously recognize Katya's dominating personality as a mother-figure.¹⁶

15. Did Martha's firmness and nobility represent a concealed threat to Freud's love of independence (similar to that which Mitya felt in Katya)? - A possible clue may be contained in Freud's dream of the Botanical Monograph (*The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, N.Y. 1938, pp. 241-6). In his analysis of the dream, Freud writes that he reproaches himself for remembering so seldom to bring his wife flowers, "as she would like me to do," and is reminded "that we often forget in obedience to a purpose of the unconscious." His next association is the monograph on the coca plant. (We know that he indirectly blamed Martha for interruption of his work on this subject). He further notes that the Genus *Cyclamen* which Freud remembers having seen next morning is "my wife's favorite flower." And he associates his dreaming of the "dried specimen of the plant, as though from a herbarium" to his having become "a book-worm (cf. *herbarium*)."¹⁷ Erich Fromm would seem to be on the right track in commenting that "the monograph about the cyclamen stirs up his feeling that he fails in that aspect of life which is symbolized by love and tenderness" (*The Forgotten Language*, N.Y. 1951, p. 92). Might one further suggest that Freud's desire for "independence" appears in the dreamer seeing a "dried specimen of the plant" instead of a "blooming" cyclamen? In his analysis of the dream, Freud twice mentions the fact that the cyclamen is "my wife's favourite flower."
16. Some of the following data in Jones' biography may offer material for other analogies between Freud and the problem in *The Brothers Karamazov*:
Martha was a "pure noble beauty" to Freud, who "could both love and hate passionately." Before his marriage, he expressed doubts on being worthy of Martha, saying to himself: "You have won the dearest girl quite without merit of your own." He phantasied that his admired friend Fleischl (who was a close student of physics and mathematics) could make Martha happy. Freud became engaged to Martha about two years after the death of her father and we learn that Freud found pleasure in the fact that Martha saw a resemblance between him and her father (pp. 162, 102, 110, 89-90).

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Andre Gide, Rebel and Conformist

by

John D. Mitchell, Ed. D.

The late Andre Gide was throughout his long life a prolific and distinguished writer in nearly all forms of *belles lettres*. He enjoyed singular world-wide recognition for his literary works throughout his life, including the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature. His daring innovations in forms of the novel influenced a generation of writers both in his native France and abroad. Along side his iconoclasm in seeking new modes of literary expression, he set himself the task of becoming a master of the French language. With persistent scholarly endeavor and study of the rules and the traditions of that most precise and authoritarian language, he ultimately achieved a perfection of style and lucidity. There is reflected in Andre Gide's work and his approach to his work, innovation and submission, the pattern of the writer's life.

Andre Gide never espoused a religious faith, but he was patently attracted to religion. At one period in his life he embraced the dogma of Marxism, but later rejected authoritarian Communism. His marriage would seem never to have been consummated, but he had a child out of wedlock, whom he publically acknowledged. No other literary figure — including Oscar Wilde — has in the history of the arts been so compulsive about telling the world about his homosexuality.

The journals, autobiography, novels, articles, plays, essays, and translations of the works of other writers provide an exceptional opportunity for applied psychoanalysis, for the minutiae of thoughts, fantasies, actions, and reactions — particularly in the journals — are set down over an extended period with protestant honesty and a painful candor. A parallel reading of his journals and his autobiography is most rewarding for insights into the dynamics of the personality of

Andre Gide, creative writer and genius in art.

For coming to a deeper understanding of Andre Gide, rebel and conformist, one may turn first to the revealing childhood experiences reported in his autobiography *Se le Grain ne Meurt . . .*

Gide was an only child of protestant parents. As an only child and as a child frail in health, his parents were protective. Their wealth enabled them to be more protective than parents of lesser means with a similar child. Gide as a child lived pretty exclusively in a world of adults. The adult world of seeming giants and oversized furniture and objects is a fearful and frustrating world for any child. Given the opportunity, a child seeks out objects and things of a size commensurate with his diminutive stature, and he seeks companionship with his contemporaries. For a child in this world of Gullivers, there is comfort and reassurance in peer companionship - if it be only with one other child.

As an only child without a brother or sister or relatives contemporary with his age, Gide's contacts with other children his age were meager and fleeting. One early association was with the son of the concierge, which culminated in infantile sex play. Gide does not clearly indicate whether parental discovery of this led to a dissolution of his friendship or that the family simply for other reasons, moved to another apartment. In any case the omnipotent parents, without explanation, terminated a human relationship for Gide. It is not idle speculation that the protestant insistence on sin and retribution, the evil inherent in sex could have prompted the child Gide to make the infantile assumption that the enforced cessation of this friendship was punishment from above for his sexuality.

Under the watchful eye of an adult, Gide sought companionship with another little boy of his age in the public gardens. Though overtly the association was slight, the identification was emotionally very intense. When Gide missed the little boy and overheard the little boy's nurse tell his adult companion that the boy had gone blind, Gide

went about for days with his eyes closed in order to discover what his friend was experiencing.

The seasonal movement of the family from Paris to their estates in Normandy, to the homes of his paternal and maternal grandparents militated against Gide's establishing any long term companionship with children his own age. Gide was forced by circumstances to seek the gratification of contact with human beings from his mother and father, and mother and father surrogates.

Such a situation aggravates and intensifies the omnipresent and universal Oedipal conflict. What was the nature of Gide's relations with his mother and his father within the family constellation? On the basis of Gide's own recapitulation of memories of his father, the father was a taciturn man of a studious nature. Gide's father would seem to have almost dwelt apart in his study, and it became an event when the child Gide was invited in to visit with his father.

The mother, however, would seem to have been a greater source of affection than the father. Gide was almost fearful of his aloof father. Nevertheless, by contrast with the father, the mother was more of the authoritarian. Gide tells of the conflict between his parents in the matter of the administration of authority. Gide's father was of the opinion that any order or admonition given the child ought to be explained to the child in detail within his comprehension. To the contrary, Gide's mother was firm in insisting that the child show unquestioning obedience. Gide concludes in his autobiography that he as an adult is of the opinion that his mother's concept of the parental authority was the right one! It seems safe to assume from that that the mother's will prevailed most often over that of the father.

Thus, during Gide's formative years, the father as a result of his retiring nature and his early death is for Gide a shadowy figure. Whereas the father is in the background, the mother, re-inforced by a companion mother-figure, Anna Shakelton is decidedly in the foreground. The mother figures become not only an almost exclusive source of gratifi-

cation intensified by the lack of childhood companions but also the authority figures administering fiats without explanation.

In the autobiography, *Si Le Grain ne Meurt . . .*, Gide dwells at length and lovingly on the personality, interests, and talents of Anna Shakelton. His memories of her are told with an even greater vividness than any of those of his mother. Anna Shakelton was a kind of companion to Gide's mother and something of a tutor to him as a small child, by no means an unusual thing in a European family of means. She was a spinster of Scottish nationality; her many years of residence . . . with the family had welded her into the family constellation. Anna Shakelton seems to have been a woman of many and varied accomplishments. She was at home in many languages, and she left behind her many translations of literary works in several foreign languages. They were never published. During his pre-school years, she was a constant companion to Gide, an only child and a lonely one. Together they collected and identified the flora and fauna of the Norman estates of the Gide family.

Anna Shakelton seems to have had some talent and inclination for music. While still a small child, Gide's instruction in music and the playing of the piano was begun. The man who was his mentor in music was a brilliant pianist and minor composer. He was a frequent visitor in the Gide household. Following the death of Gide's father, he was the sole male visitor during the extended period of mourning of Gide's mother. Evidently, Gide's mother had some qualms even in regard to his visits during her period of being an unattached widow. All of which Gide reports in his autobiography.

Gide's mother and Anna Shakelton used to play duets together. Likewise, Anna Shakelton and the musician took to playing duets together. Gide sets down in his autobiography that an older relative of the family reported to his mother one day that he had surprised the musician making advances toward Anna Shakelton. It is easy to see how closely identified with music were Gide's mother and most

particularly the mother substitute, Anna Shakelton. Assuming the child's desire to monopolize the mother figure, it is easy to realize the impact that the report that the musician had made advances toward Anna Shakelton, had on the mind of the sensitive child Gide.

Gide reports frequently in his journals that in adult life he was incapable of playing the piano if anyone was around and might hear him. Guests in the country house at Cuverville would prevent him from playing. Yet he would spend hours for days on end perfecting his playing Chopin, Beethoven, Albeniz. He notes with concern his fear that his practicing distracts him from his real metier, writing. His intense study of music, almost an addiction led to his being able to perfect his reading of musical scores until he could *hear* the music. This is no mean accomplishment, for it is an achievement rare among professional musicians. This was one of the feats of genius of Toscanini, and it is spoken of with awe by other musicians. For a non-professional musician to pursue music with such intensity is extraordinary; for such a devotee of music to be without the need of an audience ever is indeed unusual. (One prolonged period of playing the piano actually resulted in Gide's straining the ligaments in his hands and incapacitated him for playing the piano for some days). For such a talented and persistent student of the piano to be immobilized by the possible presence in the house of as few as one or two friends is astonishing and merits closer scrutiny.

Obviously, there is a sexual aura about Gide's compulsive need for "making music" at the piano and his immobilizing anxieties if other people are within the house. Gide's wife, a cousin, would seem to have merged somewhat with the figures of his mother and Anna Shakelton. By reading between the lines, Gide would seem to have been able to spend hours of devotion to the piano with Em, his wife, present in the house at Cuverville. It is interesting to note, too, that after the death of his wife, in 1938, Gide no longer touched the piano.

There are other items which would seem to bear out

the contention that Gide both identified himself with and attempted to move toward the female, the mother-figure, represented by Anna Shakelton. Gide had been from his earliest years a serious student of languages. During his forties when there is often a decline in new intellectual endeavors, Gide hires a teacher to guide his study of English. His conscientious study of the language takes him beyond Shakespeare to a mastery of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, a poetic work which is not without difficulty for students native to the English language. Gide is noted for his translations of works in other languages. From the journals, one learns that Gide's writing was almost a titanic struggle against inhibiting emotions. He informs us that writing, his writing, left him spent, emotionally and physically. His perfectionism in writing is almost fantastic. Albeit it has resulted in a miracle of style.

Here again Gide seems not only to be emulating Anna Shakelton but attempting to reach her, the female, the mother-figure. To play the piano in the presence of others was to expose himself in a forbidden sexual act. As was true with his musical performance, so too was his writing unconsciously involved and confused with sexuality. Before submitting his writing to a larger public through publication, he invariably, as he reports in the journals, would seek out the approval of a close friend, usually Copeau. Such testing always left him enervated, disturbed, a victim of nights of insomnia. How supersensitive he admitted he had always been to criticism! It is noteworthy that Gide was never highly critical or destructive of his contemporaries' works, for unconscious identification of his writings with sexuality made him fearful of counter-aggression and therefore defensive.

Through a study of Gide's aptitudes, talents, and intense preoccupations, it has been noted how strongly Gide unconsciously identified himself with Anna Shakelton, clearly his mother once removed. Having identified himself with a female figure, despite his own masculine sex, it was likely that he would in his life be psycho-sexually maladjusted. The mother had become invested with authority, and it was in-

evitable for Gide that in his own search for authority, he would identify himself with the authority figure he had known as a child. Overt efforts on Gide's part to reach the female sexually provoked anxiety. As a result of early death of the father, Gide's Oedipal conflict would seem not to have had a resolution through identification with the father. The incest taboo of Western civilization made for inhibitions, re-inforced by an inculcated protestant attitude toward sexuality as sin.

Gide's unconscious attempts to resolve his inner conflicts suggest that he sought sublimation of the movement toward the female through deep involvement in art forms closely identified with the mother and the mother substitute. The results have been exceptional accomplishment in literature, for which he won deserved recognition. As can be seen in his journals, it was at great cost to him personally.

How much the use of applied psychoanalysis in a study of Andre Gide's life and works enables us to explain the mystery of genius is hard to say. Too little is known as yet of the nature of the process, and the degree of influence of heredity, social and cultural environment. Had Gide's childhood been more propitious, his genius might still have expressed itself in literature, with even greater accomplishment, fraught with less anguish and conflict between rebelling and conforming. Nevertheless, the fact that Andre Gide has left a detailed record of his life and his literary labors enables us to understand him better with the use of psychoanalytic insights.

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Iago the Paranoiac

by

Gordon Ross Smith

Some years ago Dr. Martin Wangh (9) discussed Shakespeare's Iago as a paranoiac who despises women, who loathes Desdemona for usurping the place he coveted in Othello's affections, and who rationalizes with incompatible excuses his conscious hatred (unconscious love) for Othello and Cassio. Wangh suggested homosexual panic in Iago precipitated by Othello's marriage, pointed out how three times Iago interrupts what he imagines to be Othello's nuptial proceedings, and showed how Iago's behavior illustrates two of the four masks of homosexuality described by Freud (3). Wangh also discussed the raging tooth dream as a fantasy of fellatio and the strawberry handkerchief as a breast symbol.

Aside from automatic listing in the standard annual Shakespeare bibliographies, Dr. Wangh's article has gone unnoticed or at least uncommented upon by Shakespearean scholars. Perhaps the chief reason lies in the disinclination of most literary historians to acquaint themselves with psychoanalytic theory, for which phenomenon there are in turn many other reasons. A second reason may lie in certain undemonstrated assumptions of "historical" literary criticism in recent decades, namely, that Shakespeare was bookish and disinclined to use his own direct observation; although Hardin Craig (2) recently remarked that "An unimpeded observation of life" seems to have been Shakespeare's habit of mind. Professor Craig's view has not yet been generally accepted by conservative editors or professors of literature.

Three further reasons for the general lack of notice are that Dr. Wangh's essay (a) did not cite all of the textual evidence that will support his point of view, (b) did not distinguish explicitly enough between evidence and inference,

and (c) did not show the relevance of his interpretation to the dramatic functions of such a work of art. This last can be fatal to the possibilities of general acceptance of a psychoanalytic interpretation of a classic, for without it a faint and figurative "So what?" tends to echo down the academic corridors. It is my intention here to discuss these three aspects of Dr. Wangh's article.

(a) *Further Evidence*

Of Freud's four masking contradictions of homosexual love Wangh cited the first and third: that the paranoiac hates the object of his unconscious love (*Othello* and *Cassio*), and that it is not the paranoiac who loves the man or men, but rather, some woman. As evidence of the first contradiction Wangh cited Iago's statements of hatred for Othello but failed to mention Iago's comparable expressions toward *Cassio* as an incompetent book soldier and a drunkard improperly advanced before himself, his scheming to get Cassio murdered, and most interesting of all, the ambivalence and self-condemnation in Iago's remark, "He hath a daily beauty in his life / That makes me ugly" (V.i.19-29). As evidence of Freud's third contradiction Wangh pointed out that Iago suspects Cassio with both Emilia and Desdemona—although the play gives no evidence elsewhere to justify such suspicions—and Othello with Emilia as well as with Desdemona. Of these four relationships, which exhaust all the possible combinations of the four principals concerned, only one is not a complete delusion.

Freud's second and fourth masking contradictions were that the paranoiac hates the object of his unconscious love because the latter persecutes him and that the paranoiac loves no one or else only himself. Iago illustrates both of these also, the former because of his reaction to Othello's advancement of Cassio as lieutenant and in his suspicions of their both having made him a cuckold, the latter in such explicit statements as these: (1) "Others there are / Who . . . / Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;/ . . . These fellows have some soul;/ And such a one do I profess

myself. . . . / Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty, / But seeming so, for my peculiar end." (I.i.49-60) (2) "I never found man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a guineahen, I would change my humanity with a baboon." (I.iii.315-318) (3) "I thank you for this profit; and from hence / I'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence." (III.iii.379-380) The first and third of these remarks serve certain dramatic functions of exposition and deceit, but those functions could have been as readily served by remarks that did not parallel the independent self-love of the second. We are rather obliged to conclude that Shakespeare conceived Iago as one who would repeatedly declare he loved only himself.

Iago's violations of logic presumably occasioned by his believing one or another of these masking propositions are several, only some of which were pointed out by Wangh. Iago's ambivalence toward Cassio already cited also exists toward Othello: "The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not. / Is of a constant, loving, noble nature." (II.i.297-298) (To call such repeatedly juxtaposed contradictions mere exposition within a primitive dramatic technique, as various twentieth century scholars have done, is to give them a categorical label but is *not* to prove they belong in such a category within an art in so many other respects so calculated and so consummate.) In the first scene Iago tells Roderigo he hates Cassio and Othello because Cassio had been made lieutenant. If this were the chief grievance, then presumably Othello's subsequent removal of Cassio (II.iii.248-249) would have removed Iago's animus also; instead, as Wangh noted, we find it unabated. If we must understand his animus as produced by his suspicions of Othello's and Cassio's having seduced Emilia, then the fuss over the lieutenancy becomes irrelevant. So far as Othello and Emilia are concerned, there are further difficulties: when voicing his suspicions, Iago describes Othello as "lusty" (II.i.304-308); yet both before and after this occasion he describes Othello as defective in appetite, loveliness, sympathy, manners and beauties (II.i.

229-233) and weak in sexual function (II.iii.351-354). Othello declares "the young affects / In me defunct" (I.iii.264-265), and himself "much declin'd / Into the vale of years." (III. iii.265-266) Iago admits he has no grounds for his suspicions except that "it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets / He has done my office," a suspicion that Emilia scorns (IV.ii. 145-147), and that no one else anywhere in the play so much as hints. Yet Iago continues, "I know not if 't be true; / But I, for mere suspicion in that kind, / Will do as if for surety." (I.iii.392-396) Here, surely, is an explicit dramatic statement of a will instead of a reason to believe.

The same will to believe is made apparent in Shakespeare's handling of Iago's suspicions of Cassio with Desdemona. Initially he suggests the liaison as a means of revenge upon Othello (I.iii.398-404), but on the second occasion he appears more nearly convinced. With typical paranoid delusions of reference such as were described by Freud (4), he misinterprets Cassio's courtesies to Desdemona to his own psychic ends: "He takes her by the palm [Iago presumes Cassio did so to see if it was moist, since a moist palm was thought indicative of an amorous disposition]; ay, well said, whisper. With as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship [there is no evidence that Cassio or anyone else thought these courtesies were courtship].—You say true; 'tis so indeed.—If such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kiss'd your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kiss'd! an excellent curtsy! 'Tis so, indeed [i.e., that Cassio is her paramour]. Yet again your fingers to your lips? Would they were clyster-pipes for your sake!" (II.i.168-178) Iago's comparison of Cassio's fingers to "clyster-pipes" is one of those Shakespearean figures with multiple meanings. A clyster-pipe was a syringe—an obvious phallic symbol—and especially one used for administering an enema. Since Iago mentions Cassio's fingers being at his lips, the allusion to clyster-pipes suggests both fellatio and pederasty, as does

the raging-tooth fantasy later on. Shortly after this scene on the quays, Iago talks Roderigo into accepting his calumny (II.i.220-290), and has apparently convinced himself: "That Cassio loves her, I do well believe 't; / That she loves him, 'tis apt and of great credit." (II.i.295-296) He quite evidently enjoys the idea (II.iii.363, 394-396; IV.i.1-4, 33-34, 71-73, 85-87).

In brief, it is not logic or acute observation that leads Iago to the conscious beliefs that seem to animate him, but delusions of reference and a will to believe, although in violation of logic. S. T. Coleridge's description of these processes has become one of his most famous phrases: "the motive-hunting of a motiveless malignity." Literary criticism could go no farther, and it wasn't until the appearance of Wangh's article that the portrait of Iago was shown to be parallel to a recurrent type of human behavior.

(b) *Evidence and Inference*

Essentially the case for Iago as a paranoiac must rest upon the above evidence, whether newly presented here or reviewed from Wangh's article. These are the things indisputably in the play and indisputably parallel to psychoanalytic observation. If the case be accepted as the proper frame of reference for the interpretation of the play, then a great many otherwise unrelated details in the play come into a new kind of focus. These I shall discuss presently, but *not* before pointing out how they are *consequences* of the interpretation, not evidences for it, unless by convergence of evidence, which is a method always leaving some question, since much of the evidence can converge quite as effectively within a totally different frame of reference and since the internal consistency of a system is no proof of its validity. On the other hand, convergence is the method that every usual frame of reference for Shakespearean criticism has always been obliged to employ. Confronted as we are with no record whatever of Shakespeare's theories, intentions, objectives, or interpretations, no other method is available.

Wangh's procedure might be divided into four steps.

The first consists of the citation of actions and ideas in Shakespeare's text. The second consists of clear parallels between psychoanalytic formulations and those actions and ideas. The third consists of the inferences drawn immediately from the interaction of steps one and two. The fourth consists of further inferences arrived at by the application of more analytic concepts against the inferences of step three. The first three steps seem to me to be reasonably sound, but the fourth must by its nature consist of inferences about events or characters for which the text gives no support. They therefore depend for their validity upon their degree of positive correlation with the basic pattern which the text does allow us to infer—in this case, but still tentatively, the paranoia of Iago. It is the presence of the type of evidence arrived at in this fourth step that has so often prevented general acceptance of a psychoanalytic interpretation of a classic that in other respects may be very worthy of general attention.

The point may be clearer if I illustrate from Wangh's article. He suggests that Iago's symptoms had their onset suddenly and just before the play begins and that they were precipitated by Othello's unexpected marriage to Desdemona. But what hypothetically might have taken place before the play began does not constitute evidence. We could as reasonably say instead that the paranoia was brought on by Iago's failure to get the coveted and expected lieutenancy, that this failure in the man's world was psychically disastrous, as Sulzberger (8) recently testified it can be. If we restrict ourselves to what can be demonstrated, we cannot say either, for the text of the play gives us no clues.

Similarly with the strawberry handkerchief: we have no precise description of it and cannot know what it looked like. Wangh suggests that the strawberries are symbols of the nipples and that Iago is the envious older child. I should like to suggest as an alternative that since breast and penis symbols are often interchangeable, as Rodrique (7) Lewinsky (6) and Winterstein (10) have all testified, the strawberries might equally well or better have been penis symbols, or even actual representations of the glans, enwreathed in

"curious" hair-like leaves. If so, we can understand why a gay young soldier like Cassio should want a copy of it (III.iv. 180-190) and why Bianca with her pretensions to respectability (V.i.122-123), should show such furious indignation at being asked to make the copy (IV.i.153-161). Moreover, if the strawberries are either symbols or representations of the glans penis, then why the handkerchief should be a symbol of happy matrimony (III.iv.58-60), why its loss should presage marital alienation (III.iv.60-63), why Othello gave it to Desdemona (III.iii.291; III.iv.63-65), why he attaches such importance to the gift (III.iii.294; III.iv.55, 66-75), why Iago produces the fantasy of having seen Cassio wipe his beard (and mouth!) with it (III.iii.437-439), and why Othello is so furious when he hears Iago's lie about an intrinsically trivial object (III.iii.439-450) all fall into place as parts of the larger pattern. Thus the strawberry handkerchief, upon which the whole intrigue seems so trivially to turn, would become the perfect symbol for the central psychological conflicts of the play. If we accept this interpretation, many other seemingly mechanical details acquire dramatic and symbolic significations they did not previously have: Desdemona's inability to bind Othello's aching head with the handkerchief, and its falling to the ground immediately after (III.iii.285-288), symbolize both the inadequacy of their sexual relationship with its attendant trust to undo Iago's damage and the consequent cessation of sexual intimacy; Iago's seizure of it [(III.iii.310-320) symbolizes both his baleful influence over their marital relationship and his own repressed homosexual desires; the repeated bickering about it that ensues symbolizes the warfare of sexual interests and finally, Othello's reference to it as a "recognition and pledge of love" (V.ii.214), together with his accompanying mention of his mother and father, Cassio, and himself and Desdemona, indicates that sexual elements are the only important parts of the symbolism of the handkerchief. But all of these ideas, however consistent with each other, are *consequences* of interpreting the play as a tale of paranoia and attendant sexual turmoil. They cannot be con-

sidered evidence, except by convergence, as I said above.

A third reservation about Wangh's article is his use of Shakespeare's source as evidence of the implicit content of the play. Shakespeare was so free with his sources, especially when they were contemporaneous rather than ancient, that we can never conclude that anything in his source is consequently implicit in his play. Something in his source *may* be explicit in the play, *may* be implicit, *may* be merely absent, or *may* be replaced by its complete opposite. It is with sources and contemporaneous ideas as it is with psychoanalytic parallels: what we can suppose present depends primarily upon what we can find in the text.

In brief, Wangh's or any psychoanalytic approach to Shakespeare should base itself exclusively upon the text, should demonstrate the parallels to analytic literature point to point, should consider and dispose of all the counter evidence, and should clearly label as speculative those ideas which are based not directly upon the text but rather upon intermediate inferences.

(c) *Relevance of This Interpretation*

If with the above reservations we accept the chief outlines of Wangh's interpretation, we find various consequences broadening out from revisions of the interpretation and acting of individual lines and parts in *Othello* to the nature of tragedy in this play and its position within Shakespearean tragedy in general. I shall indicate only briefly the nature of these consequences.

A considerable number of remarks, especially by Iago, acquire additional meanings. Thus his early declaration, "I am not what I am" (I.i.65), which ought to be phrased "I am not what I seem," if it were simple, objective self-description, can be seen to express the fundamental conflict in Iago's mind: his denial of his own homosexual impulses. His remark somewhat later, "Men should be what they seem" (III.iii.126), illustrates the split even better. Superficially it represents, like the former one, his hypocritical pose as an honest man, but on deeper levels of self-description it

may be considered an expression of his superego which would say, "Men should (i.e., ought to or must) be heterosexual who seem so." On a still deeper level it expresses the contradictory id impulses and as such may be translated, "Men who are homosexual should seem (i.e., be) so." As an ego-product the remark is a wonder, for it expresses or deals with all of what Freud (5) called the ego's three harsh masters.

After Iago gets Cassio drunk and Othello asks how the ensuing brawl had come about, Iago answers, "I do not know. Friends all but now, even now / In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom / Devesting them for bed." (I.iii.177-181) If we interpret the play within a so-called historical frame of reference that considers Iago merely the stage convention of the Machiavel or calumniator believed, the simile here is aimless. Within Wangh's frame of reference we can easily see its homosexual undertones and understand such an image as psychically determined, a shadow cast on the surface from the impulses below. This montage-like quality of human thinking Shakespeare has elsewhere shown himself well aware of, (e.g., II Henry IV, IV.v.93).

In the long scene where Iago swears loyalty and at last becomes lieutenant, such overtones recur like luridly flickering lights. Wangh has pointed out how the last line, Iago's "I am your own forever" (III.iii.479), expresses Iago's deepest feelings toward Othello. But the whole middle of the scene is patterned upon courtship and the conclusion, upon the marriage ceremony. The overtones of courtship were apparent to the nineteenth century actor Edwin Booth, who during the raging tooth passage had Iago holding Othello's hand, "which Othello [drew] with disgust from his grasp." (1) The grim parody of the marriage ceremony begins where Othello kneels and exclaims, "Now by yond marble heaven, / In the due reverence of a sacred vow / I here engage my words." Iago promptly joins him:

Do not rise yet.

Witness, you ever-burning lights above,
You elements that clip us round about, (*Kneels.*)

Witness that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service! Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever. (III.iii.460-469)

Modern editors usually gloss the word "remorse" to mean "solemn obligation," and this interpretation derives from the 1911 *Shakespeare Glossary* of C. T. Onions, which in turn is derived from the *Oxford New English Dictionary*. But the *N.E.D.* declares this use of the word obsolete and rare and cites this line from *Othello* as the only extant representative of such meaning. It follows that this meaning for the word is not certainly established. I should like to suggest that the proper meaning here may be its most common one—pity, compassion—and that Iago's use of it here means, superficially, the "pity of it" (IV.i.206) which Othello somewhat later mentions to him, but more significantly, it indicates Iago's deep internal regret that he is soon to destroy the persons he most wants to love. Such a feeling in the depths of his mind is also suggested by the use of the word "clip", which superficially means "surround" but more commonly meant embrace as a lover.

Subsequently Othello falls down before Iago in what is reportedly his second (IV.i.52) fit. Especially noteworthy is the tone—formerly thought diabolical, now, psychotic—that Iago takes:

Oth. . . . Pish! Noses, ears, and lips.—Is't possible?—
Confess-handkerchief!—O devil! (*Falls in a trance.*)
Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! (IV.i.43-46)

Superficially "my medicine" is the deceit Iago has fed Othello, but on a deeper level of Iago's mental life his working medicine is the semen that his repressed homosexuality so longed to deliver to the prostrate figure before him. Freud (3) has cited a comparable instance. Iago has earlier referred to his machinations as "my poison," (III.iii.325), an epithet that conveys all the preceding plus the censorship that kept his homosexuality repressed.

Many other passages of the play can be found to yield additional and comparable meanings within Wangh's frame of reference.. Iago's incessant allusions to sexual matters suggest curtailment of satisfactory outlet, and Emilia's generalizations upon husbands suggest that he had permanently left her bed: " 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man. / They are all but stomachs, and we all but food; / They eat us hungerly, and when they are full / They belch us." (III.iv. 103-106) Her own frequently loose remarks, as in the willow song scene, suggest that she too lacks adequate sexual satisfactions. Certainly Iago nowhere shows her any affection.

We should certainly note here that for none of these foregoing interpretations is it necessary to suppose that Shakespeare clearly anticipated psychoanalytic ideas upon the etiology of paranoia. Neither here nor elsewhere does he give us any systematic theory of personality. Instead, he presents us with various facets of the *surface* of characters whom we can recognize as specific types and whom we can therefore suppose he reported from his own observation. It is not his prosodic or dramatic art but rather his remarkable insight and consequent capacity for the selection of bafflingly convincing surface details that make certain of Shakespeare's characters so lifelike and that mark Falstaff, Brutus, Hamlet, Iago, Cleopatra, and various others as the creations of the same inimitable master. That Shakespeare anticipated Freud's systematic formulations is doubtful; that in *Othello* he shows some knowledge of the configuration we call paranoia, of its suspicion, its destructiveness, and its relation to homosexuality, seems more than likely, but whether he arrived at such knowledge by introspection and intuition, or by some other means must for the present remain a speculation.

A second consequence of this interpretation is that it can provide a controlling central idea that is intelligible to a modern audience and that is therefore capable of restoring to the realms of tragedy what by the general changes of taste and understanding had become for many people merely an improbable and ornate melodrama. This is not a proposal

to "improve" Shakespeare by violating his text. Rather, it is a proposal to exploit what is already there and was very possibly put there for the understanding of the "judicious," as Dr. Johnson called them. Certainly it is necessary for the achievement of tragic feeling that the characters and plot of a drama must be at least believable enough for us to accept them as possible. We might reasonably give less attention to interpretations more suitable to attract and hold the ignorant wonder of the long-departed groundlings and give more attention to developing through the actors the character insights implicit in the text.

A third consequence is that *Othello* as a tragedy leaves the category of poetic melodrama to which many critics have relegated it and joins certain other Shakespearean tragedies, particularly *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, as plays in which the catastrophic events issue not from trivial accidents or occasional errors of judgment but from the deep, involuntary parts of character. There lies the essence of these tragedies: the people come to grief not casually or by mistake, but by repeated acts that issue from the deepest parts of themselves; for reasons within only themselves they cannot avoid their own predicaments. Tragedy resides in the heart of character. Its inescapable quality is justified by what responsibility each person ultimately carries for what he has become, but its tragic qualities derive from the helplessness of people to escape from what they essentially are.

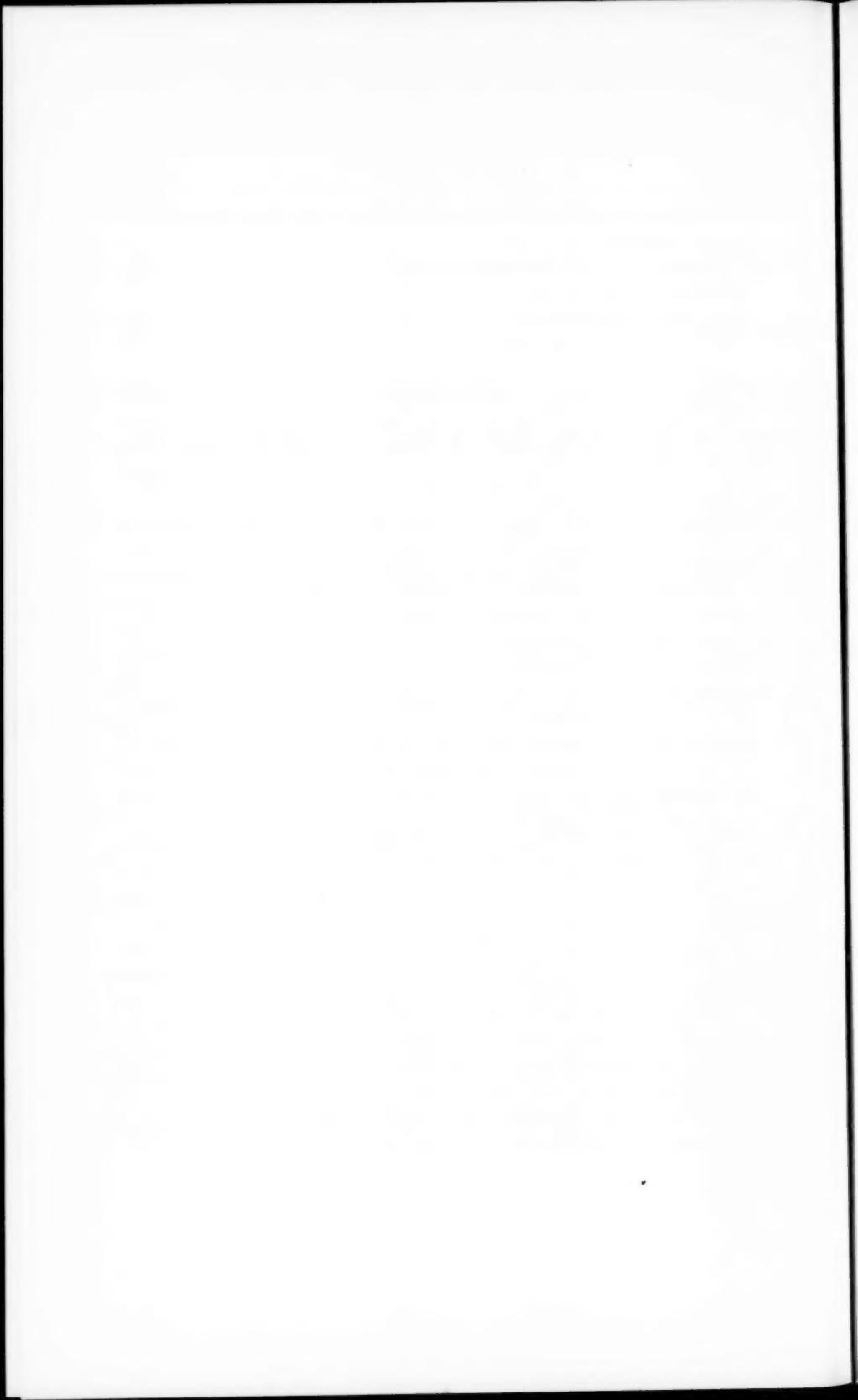
One may, if he wish, continue to consider *Othello* a poetic melodrama creakily hinging upon an inexplicable villain and trivial mischance, but the sense of tragedy cannot be brought about by such elements unless the spectators manage to suspend their critical common sense. Within Wangh's interpretation such suspension is not necessary. All the major figures of *Othello* become possible people caught in a net of circumstance which their characters make them unable to escape. Through psychoanalytic understanding the

play becomes again, as it presumably also was three centuries ago, a tragedy.

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A Graphological Dream

by

Helen Weissenstein

Alma, a woman in her middle fifties, who had never married and is interested in graphology, had the following dream in which graphological material was used: "Mr. Blue is standing in front of me, reading something that I have written. He complains that it is very hard to read. I apologize and say that I use my typewriter whenever I can. He says with a smile that the *a* in father is all right." The mood of the dream was a pleasant one, and Alma felt happy when she awoke.

Years ago she had attended a series of lectures which Blue gave. He had been a nice young man but of little interest to her, and she was wondering why she should suddenly dream of him until it struck her that she knew another man with the same name of whom she had thought the evening before.

She had met this Mr. Blue 2, an elderly man, at a party, and he had reminded her of her late father of whom she had been extremely fond. They had been out together once, and afterwards she had reproached herself, thinking that he might have preferred to break up their meeting sooner and stayed out late only because he could see that she wanted it. That had been long ago, but even the evening before the dream she had felt very embarrassed when she suddenly remembered the little incident. Having associated that far, she realized that the Mr. Blue of the dream was not the insignificant young man to whom the manifest dream-content pointed but probably a symbol of her own father.

To the graphological part of the dream she had the following associations. Her handwriting is actually very hard to read, and she is quite self-conscious about it. As she states in her dream, she uses as a rule her typewriter. But

lately she wrote a few notes to friends in longhand and did it with a certain pleasure.

She always felt that the chief reason why her handwriting is difficult to read is the way she makes the letters of the so-called *a*-series, the *a*, *d*, *g*, *o* and *q*, which she writes unusually wide open at the top so that they can be easily mistaken for other letters. Her *a* for instance looks often very much like a *u* (sample A).

no squandering

no squandering

When she awoke from the dream, she remembered that a few days before, analyzing a handwriting, she had wondered whether the letter *a* was made the right way. Most people begin the *a*—as well as the other letters of the *a*-series—with a stroke that is curved at the bottom and open at the top and is called a garland (sample B). But some

U

garland

a

a written with garland

start their *a* instead with a so-called arcade, a stroke curved at the top and open at the base (sample C).

A

arcade

a

a written with arcade

The letter *a*, written with an arcade, may indicate secrecy, concealment, frequently even mendacity or other forms of dishonesty (6, 7, 9).

Analyzing the above mentioned handwriting, Alma had looked up Pulver (7) to find a sample of such an *a* and to reread what he had written about it. A few days later, when she tried to interpret her dream, she remembered his saying that the *a*, made with the garland, opens at the *top* (sample B), and the *a*, written with the *arcade*, at the *base*

(sample C). He explained, she recalled, that the open top symbolizes the writer's willingness to accept moral laws and influences from above, but that in the *a* which is made the other way around the arcade closes the letter against this higher realm, and that this formation appears often in the writing of thieves.

Having come that far, she wondered whether Blue's remark in her dream "the *a* in father is all right" might mean that she, writing the *a* the right way and with an unusually wide open top, was very receptive to the higher moral and spiritual influences from her late father for which she felt most grateful.

Only after a while it struck her that the dream might have a deeper meaning. Having been analyzed, she was well aware of the fact that she had been over-attached to her father. Was it her receptiveness in this respect, that is her unconscious Oedipus wishes, which were symbolized in the dream by her wide-open *a*?

She also noticed that whenever she thought of the dream, she remembered another one which she had had a few days before and from which she awoke, feeling very depressed. She could remember only a fragment that seemed to follow a rhythm as if it were part of a song or poem, "And . . . lies buried near the castle. . . ."

Wondering after awaking what it was that had lain buried, she had to think of white birds. From those she associated at once to a story which she had read recently. One of the characters in this story was an old physician, who had a tremendous power over everybody around him, but whom the heroine suspected of being a crook. When she watched him kneeling beside an unconscious woman, his ear on her heart, it seemed to her as if his long beard were some white bird, ready to bite the patient. When Alma had read the story, it had impressed her deeply, and she had wondered whether the old doctor had been a father symbol for the author.

Following these associations, we can see that in this earlier and fragmentary dream her father was not the be-

loved and admired hero of her waking hours but a person to be distrusted and feared, his beard a dangerous bird that might bite her any moment. There can be little doubt about the meaning of this white bird since a bird is a frequent phallus symbol (2, 10). Since the dream made her feel very depressed, we must conclude that it expresses a wish-fulfilment (1). It shows her deeply repressed unconscious resentment against the beloved father, which is the natural consequence of her over-attachment to him.

As mentioned above, she remembered the dream fragment in a certain rhythm to which she associated a German poem, Bertran de Born, by Johann Ludwig Uhland. She had not thought of it for years but in her youth, which she had spent in a German-speaking country, she had been very fond of the poem.

Bertran de Born was a French troubadour and in the poem, that is based on historical facts, he stands bound before King Henry II while upon a nearby rock his castle Autafort burns down to ashes. Henry reproaches him with having spread rebellion that even included the king's own children. The troubadour describes in a touching song how he led the young prince Henry into revolt against his father. He tells how the mortally wounded young man was tortured by the thought that he would have to die, cursed by the king. In his last moments the prince had reached out for his father's hand and, unable to obtain it, shaken that of his friend Bertran de Born. The troubadour adds that it was his despair over the young prince's death that has broken his own power. The king is so deeply moved by the song that he forgives both, Bertran de Born and his dead son.

This is not the place to examine the very interesting question whether Uhland in writing this poem gave himself absolution for some unconscious rebellion against his own father, nor whether the poem's great popularity was due to a reader identification with the remorseful prince who was so nobly forgiven. What we want to show here is only that it had this meaning for Alma. It must have always been of great importance to her since, though she had not read it for

years, she still knew the long poem by heart—except for one stanza. This stanza, which she had completely forgotten, describes the prince's despair because he has to die without his father's forgiveness. As she identified herself with the prince, this part of the poem was obviously too painful for her. Therefore she repressed it altogether and went on straight to the end where the king forgives his son.

Did the fragmentary dream give her the feeling of having obtained absolution? The fact that she was very depressed after awaking shows that her repressed resentment against the dearly loved father still loomed as unforgiven sin in her unconscious. But the vague hope for absolution announced itself in the rhythm of the dream that made her think of the Bertran de Born poem.

It was a few days later that she suddenly remembered the little incident with Blue 2 and felt guilty and humiliated. As was mentioned above, Blue 2 represented the father for her. Obviously the recollection of that trifling event upset her so much because it reproduced her feeling of being rejected which she must have experienced as a little girl with her father. Her disappointment about this rejection might have easily been the chief reason for her unconscious resentment. This explains why she remembered the Blue 2 incident with such intense discomfort shortly after the fragmentary dream.

The following night she had the graphological dream in which Blue 1 told her with a smile that the *a* in father was all right. Knowing her associations, we can see now three meanings in Blue's statement which come from very different levels of her mind. On a practically conscious level Blue expresses his approval because her heart and mind are wide open to her father's influence.

The second meaning lies considerably deeper: her unconscious wish to receive her father with her body is all right. She need not feel guilty about it. Nor should she feel rejected by him as she did in the incident with Blue 2.

This leads to the third meaning that is deepest repressed and connected with the earlier fragmentary dream. The

father assures her that any unconscious feeling of being rejected or of resentment which she might harbor against him does not change her positive attitude, her love for him. This love has not turned around the wrong way as the *a* in the handwriting of criminals. No, the *a* in father is all right! This is undoubtedly the most important meaning of the dream which caused her happiness and well-being after awaking. The father has forgiven her any hostile wishes, implied in the previous dream, and her hope that the Bertran de Born poem might come true has been fulfilled!

Let us go back now to the beginning of the dream. Here Blue reproaches her with the illegibility of her handwriting of which she is very self-conscious. In her dream it seems to represent her guilt concerning her father which he condones in the end. In fact an illegible handwriting is a good symbol of guilt since it frequently indicates the wish to hide something, a wish that might be entirely unconscious (3, 5, 11).

It is also noteworthy that, according to one of her associations, the chief reason why her handwriting is so hard to read is the unusually wide open top of her *a*, which on the other hand is used by the dream-work as a symbol of her great devotion to her father. Her positive and her unconscious negative attitude toward him are symbolized by the positive and negative interpretation of one and the same letter in her writing.

Another association was that lately she used her handwriting more freely. This seems to imply a diminishing of her unconscious guilt feelings. We may assume that the fragmentary dream indicated a relapse in this slow process, and the graphological dream a step forward.

Of course we can not decide from the material we have whether the wide-open top of Alma's *a* *really* symbolizes her attitude toward her father. Concerning this question we can only point out that this open top shows her reluctance to go back to the left, and is therefore a so-called rightward tendency. Since in our culture the writing moves from left to right, the right may represent purpose, the world

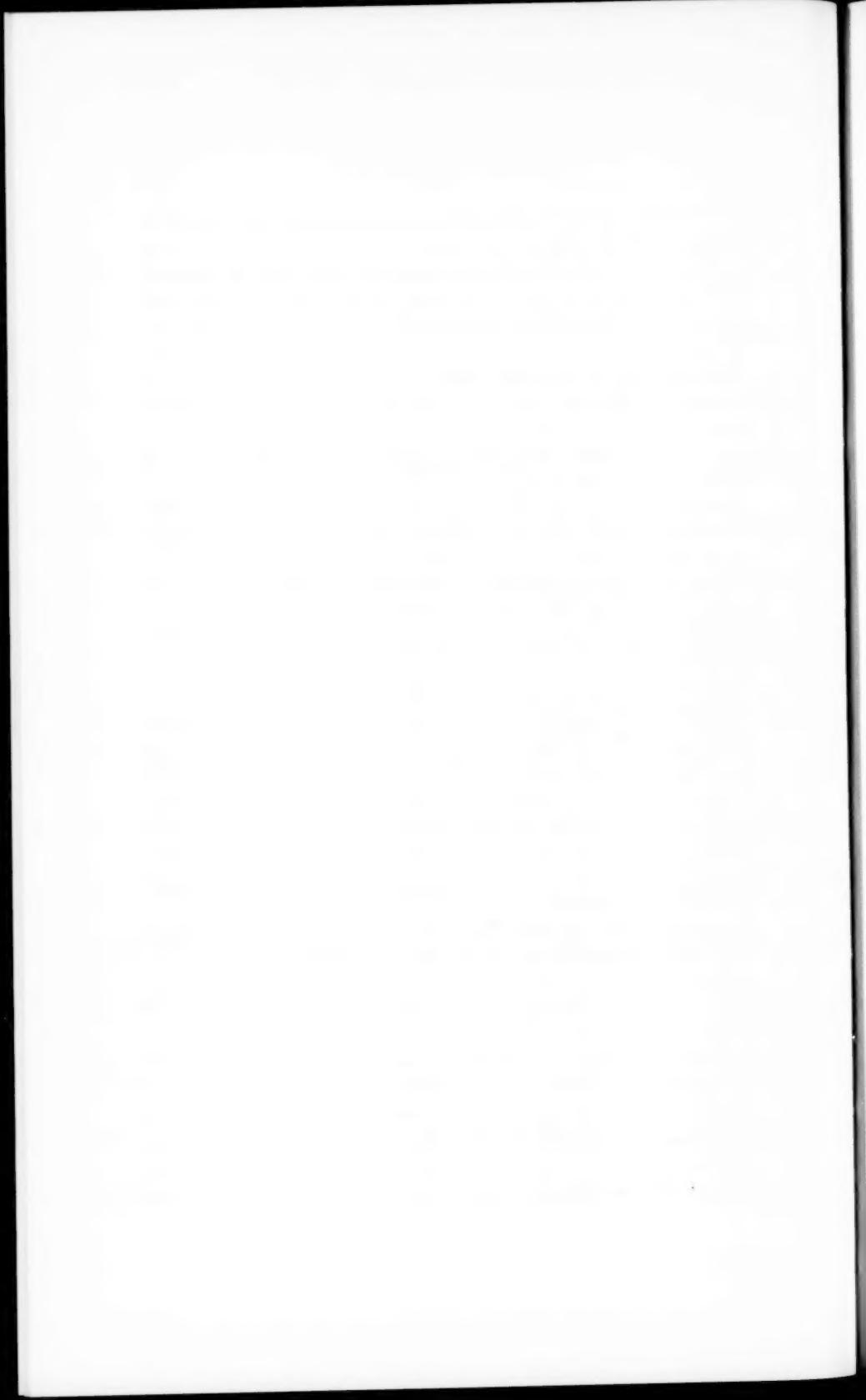
outside, the father, and rightward tendencies can mean a tending toward him (4, 8, 12).

But what we claim in this paper is only that the *dream-work* used Alma's wide-open *a* in several different ways as a symbol of her father fixation.

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The Hero in the Preferred Childhood

Stories of College Men

Mary J. Collier and Eugene L. Gaier¹

Benedict (4), like many social anthropologists, has described ways in which myths and stories, said to be popular, reflect cultural role expectancies. She sees these as differing, somewhat, from one culture to another. Rank (12), dealing with hero-myths assumed to be popular in various countries and periods, emphasizes their similarities rather than their cultural idiosyncrasies. Perhaps because, as a psychoanalyst, he was less attentive than Benedict to cultural differences, Rank concludes that all these tales, regardless of their origin, describe the fulfillment of universal human wishes.

In the present paper, preferred childhood stories of some American college men will be examined for possible reflections of the cultural role expectancies, mentioned by Benedict, and for signs of the wish-fulfilling features discussed by Rank. They have been selected and analyzed in such a way as to facilitate more empirically-based speculations than those of Benedict and Rank in several ways. First, these stories were chosen for study as "popular" stories, on the basis of the actual, stated preferences of particular individuals, rather than on the basis of hearsay. Second, they are stories of childhood rather than stories for adults and, therefore, comparatively simple in plot and character development. In their greater simplicity they should more readily reveal the presence of reflected role-expectancies or implied wish-fulfillments. Third, information was obtained from the subjects about features of the stories which they had considered to be appealing. While not decisive in establishing a story's "true" appeal, this information nevertheless serves the useful function of supplementing what might otherwise

be the writers' merely personal interpretations. Drawn as the present stories are from only one cultural group, they do not, of course, permit of cross-cultural comparisons.

Subjects and Procedure

Eighty undergraduate men, enrolled in the educational psychology sequence at Louisiana State University, were asked to recall and summarize their favorite childhood story, to name major characters and appealing features, and to compare past and present impressions of the story selected. In the analysis of the data, special but not exclusive attention was given to the portrayal of the male role.

Results

The obtained 80 stories, grouped according to Arbuthnot's (1) classification system, fell into the categories of (a) fiction, (b) fairy tales, (c) animal stories, (d) religious stories, and (e) biography, in that order of preference. (Table 1).

TABLE 1
Classification of All Stories

Story Classification	Number Choosing Story	Percent Choosing Story
Fiction	32	40.0
Fairy Tales	24	30.0
Animal Stories	15	18.8
Religious Stories	8	10.0
Biography	1	1.2
Total	80	100.0

a. The fiction category, most popular of the story groups, included forty per cent of the favorite stories. Of these (Table 2), almost all were realistic stories about what Arbuthnot (1, 2) calls the "here and now," that is, "about contemporary life in our own country." The activities of one leading character, invariably male, were emphasized; he was usually adult and often solitary, as in *Robinson Crusoe*. The most popular, single story, *Tom Sawyer*, was about a child; lacking a complete family, Tom, too, was somewhat alone.

This kind of youthful isolation also characterized the heroes of the two other most popular stories, *Treasure Island* and *Huckleberry Finn*.

In the preferred fiction stories, and in the subjects' summaries of and reports about them, the leading characters were invariably male and frequently adult. They overcame external obstacles in an active, independent, somewhat solitary way, as in *Tom Sawyer*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure Island*, and *Huckleberry Finn*.

TABLE 2
The Fiction Stories
(N = 32, 40 percent)

Tom Sawyer	7	Pride of the Yankees	1
Robinson Crusoe	5	Ten that Returned	1
Treasure Island	3	The Mystery of the Tower	1
Huckleberry Finn	3	The Hunter and the Hunted	1
Legend of Sleepy Hollow	1	Airplane Theme (no title)	1
Swiss Family Robinson	1	The Desperate Hours	1
Uncle Tom's Cabin	1	Blueberry Mountain	1
Bounty Trilogy	1	The Air Force	1
Public Enemy	1	Cowboy Stories	1

b. The fairy tale category, second to fiction in popularity, included both the old, anonymously composed folk tales, fables, myths, and epics and the so-called "new tales of magic." Almost one third of the men reported a fairy tale as their favorite childhood story, the majority selecting a tale of old magic. (Table 3). Fairy stories were usually chosen in which (a) the chief character was male, as in *The Gingerbread Man*; (b) a male character shared prominence equally with a female, as in *Hansel and Gretel*; or (c) the chief characters were male animals with some human characteristics, as in *The Three Little Pigs*. Throughout, the heroes were usually adults, as in *Robin Hood*, but sometimes children, as in *Pinocchio*. On the few occasions when fairy tales with leading female characters were chosen, the subjects' story summaries accented, instead, the importance of some masculine character, like the prince or the dwarfs, in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*; or the woodsman, in *Little*

Red Riding Hood. When female characters were present, they were usually young and in need of help, as was Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*. However, when these were older women, they were usually powerful and very good, like the giant's kindly wife in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, or powerful and very bad, like the wicked step-mother and the witch, in *Hansel and Gretel*.

The fairy tale characters, emphasized by the subjects, were also exclusively male but less frequently adult than were the fiction characters. Beset by wild animals, Magic spells, and giants, these heroes, too, tended to prevail through their own strength and ingenuity as did the woodsman in *Little Red Riding Hood*, the dwarfs in *Snow White*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Jack of giant-killing fame. Far less than one might expect in a group of unselected fairy-tales did the leading characters, of those here selected, resort to magic for the purpose of resolving their difficulties.

TABLE 3
The Fairy Tales
(N = 24, 30 per cent)

	Old Magic		New Magic
Little Red Riding Hood	3	Pinocchio	2
Snow White	3	Uncle Remus	2
Hansel and Gretel	2	Hiawatha	1
Jack and the Beanstalk	1	B'r'er Rabbit	1
Three Little Pigs	1	Uncle Wiggley	1
The Three Bears	1	Night Before Christmas	1
Gingerbread Man	1	Black Sambo	1
Song of Roland	1		
Robin Hood	1		
Jason and the Golden Fleece	1		

c. The animal stories, far less popular than fiction or fairy tales, included slightly less than one-fifth of the stories chosen. These stories were usually about what Arbuthnot (1, 2) calls "animals, objectively reported," as in *My Friend Flicka*. Sometimes, they were about "animals, as animals, but talking," as in *Bambi* and *Black Beauty*, the two most

popular animal stories. However, there were no stories in which prominent animal characters fell into Arbuthnot's (2) category of "ourselves, in fur," that is, animal characters who clearly represented human beings. It is interesting to note, however, that the leading animal characters, like their human counterparts in the other story groups, were usually described as male.

Only in the animal stories, as in *Bambi* and *Black Beauty*, were the leading male characters portrayed as dependent, suffering, thwarted, and virtually helpless to change their lot. Here, too, a solution of the hero's difficulties, atypical of all the other story groups, was frequently made through assistance or rescue by an external agent.

d. All the religious stories, comprising one tenth of the stories chosen, had leading characters who were male. In the subjects' story summaries of *David and Goliath*, chosen four times, the activities of the boy, David, were emphasized. Christ, as a child, and Tiny Tim, respectively, were the boy heroes of *Christ Child Stories* and of Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, chosen once each. Adult males were apparently important in only two of the religious stories, *Samson*, and *Adam and Eve and Satan*, each chosen once.

TABLE 4
The Animal Stories
(N = 15, 18.8 per cent)

Black Beauty	3	Five Racoons	1
Bambi	3	Billy Whiskers	1
Silverchief, Dog of the North	1	Largest Catfish on the Mississippi	1
My Friend Flicka	1	Trial in Tom Belcher's Store	1
The Wildeat (told by G'ma)	1	Panchoito and the Donkey	1
The Beaver (made up)	1		

In the religious stories, where divine assistance might conceivably have been invoked appropriately, and without undue embarrassment, the subjects once more accented the self-reliant and aggressive male character. Sometimes, as in the case of Adam, the hero defied even God. Strength,

skill, and daring again were important, as exemplified in the exploits of Samson, and of David, doing battle with Goliath. e. The only story classified as biography was about *Abraham Lincoln*. Judging from the story summary, Lincoln's adult life and mature achievements were especially appealing to the subject, although his childhood years had also been described.

From this one biographical story about Abraham Lincoln, it is impossible to generalize. However, its apparent appeal was not inconsistent with that attributed to the other story groups. Although his daring was, perhaps, more intellectual than physical, and his victories more subtle than those derived from giant-killing, Lincoln's prestige seemed to stem from overcoming obstacles in an active, independent, individualistic way.

With the exception of the animal stories, then, the leading character for almost all the stories was a human male who overcame external obstacles in an active, independent, competitive way. Indeed, it was the hero's remarkable adequacy which seemed to constitute the chief and almost invariable source of story appeal. The other story features mentioned had a limited and usually secondary appeal; they may be grouped as follows: the hero exhibits strength or power ($N=16$) ; the hero has exciting adventures ($N=16$) ; clear identification with the hero ($N=12$) ; mystery and suspense ($N=2$) ; magic ($N=2$) ; character development ($N=1$) ; comedy ($N=1$) ; locale or setting ($N=1$) ; and love theme ($N=1$).

Superficially, the animal stories seem to have had an atypical appeal; the helpless or suffering animal heroes were admired for their patience and fortitude rather than for any aggressive activity. Atypically, too, their somewhat dependent and passive manner of resolving difficulties seemed pleasing to the subjects. Therefore, one might suppose that, unlike the majority, the subjects who chose animal stories preferred the theme of passive suffering and dependency to that of active self-assertion. Closer inspection of the story-appeal data suggests, however, that the subjects' preoccupation

with activity and independence, observed in all the other story groups, was not absent from the animal stories but only less obviously present. Apparently here, by favorably comparing themselves with the usually weaker, animal characters, the readers obtained the same gratifying sense of enhanced adequacy otherwise gained from identifying with the strong, human hero. In a sense they became, either way, themselves the story hero.

Some Variables Associated with Story Selection

Story choice was significantly related, at the one per cent level of confidence, to encountering the preferred story between the ages of 7 and 10 years. (Table 5). It was not significantly associated with the subjects' encountering the story at or before the age of 6 years; with the story's having a happy ending; or with the story's having illustrations, colored or otherwise.

TABLE 5
The Variables Associated with Story Selection

Variable	Tetrachoric Coefficients
Happy Ending	.29
Pictures	.26
Colored Pictures	.25
Heard at or before the age of 6 years	.24
Heard between the ages of 7 and 10 years	.40*

* Significant at the 1 percent level of confidence

A negative correlation, (-.82) significant at less than the 1 per cent level, was found between the age at which the story was first encountered and the age for which it was recommended. Thus, the preferred story was usually recommended as appropriate for children older than the subject when he first encountered it.

When present and past attitudes toward the preferred story were compared, they appeared generally consistent with one another since almost 70 per cent of the subjects still considered their old favorite to be their present prefer-

red story for children. A few said they had changed their opinion and the remainder (27.5 per cent) were somewhat uncertain about the matter. In most cases, change or uncertainty stemmed from the fact that the reported basis for the preference had changed, rather than the preference itself. Thus, in adulthood, the old story choice was still made but more, or more consciously, on the basis of such "literary" characteristics as style or character presentation.

The possibility was indirectly explored that other people who liked the story exerted an influence on these subjects. However, almost one-half indicated that the story they preferred as children had not, then, been the favorite of anyone else. Most of the other one-half reported that the preferred story had also been the favorite of siblings or peers. Only a few subjects mentioned, as significant, the attitudes entertained by older persons toward their favorite stories; in that case, the older persons were usually women.

Discussion

Judging from the results, one might suppose that the subjects, as boys of seven to ten years, either perceived the human male role as it was described in these stories or liked to think of it that way. Presumably, too, as young adults, they continued to perceive or to enjoy thinking of it, as such. In any case, they said they approved of presenting their story, hero and all, to children aged seven to ten years or older.

Thus, at one or at both developmental stages, the strong, independent, striving, solitary, story hero, with little apparent interest in women, was possibly considered the ideal or even typical male in our culture by most of these subjects. Usually, the hero was an adult but similar characteristics were assigned to him even as a child.

The story hero will now be considered, as planned, for attributes which might reflect American, cultural role expectancies. These attributes emerge from stories preferred by only 80, American subjects; furthermore, for lack of appropriate data, they could not be compared with those of

a story hero from some other culture. Therefore, perhaps the attributes are not typically or uniquely American. That they clearly resemble traits characterized as "American" by the professionally trained observers of this and of other cultures may be seen, however, from some pertinent views reported below. When these views refer to traits which obviously resemble those of the previously described story hero, they will be presented without comment.

First, Erikson (8) remarks upon the American boy's eagerness, precociously, to abandon and be independent of the mother; his intense fear of seeming to be a sissy, wishing instead to appear as one who has learned to tolerate deprivation and loneliness; his distrust of sensuality, as well as of dependency; his emphasis on action for its own sake; and his tendency to relate to the father in fraternal, rather than in child-like fashion. Erikson proposes that, for the American frontier, these personality characteristics probably had special survival value and that, intuitively perceiving this, the American mother may unconsciously have developed the kind of child-rearing techniques which fostered them.

Next, Gorér (11) suggests that the American mother has acquired, or had thrust upon her, the dominant social as well as biological role in rearing children and that, therefore, the American child's conscience is essentially feminine. He proposes that "because of the encapsulated mother, the little boy has doubts about his masculinity" and must "prove to himself and to the world that he is a real 'he-man'" by various techniques. These comments seem pertinent not only to the story hero's insistent demonstration of unusual adequacy but, also, to the subjects' own, reported independence of their elders' taste when initially selecting the preferred story.

Since the subjects denied the effect of story décor upon story choice (in contrast to the college woman, mentioned later), and since they were college men, with presumably intellectual aspirations, Gorér's further remarks also seem relevant. "The lives of most American men are bounded and their interests drastically curtailed, by . . . constant

necessity to prove to their fellows and to themselves, that they are not sissies, not homosexuals." Except for members of certain subcultural groups, Gorer states, "most of the major and especially the minor arts . . . all intellectual pursuits are somewhat tainted; and when American intellectuals meet together, an enormous amount of time is wasted in proving conspicuously to each other that they are just regular fellows."

Since the few female characters, included in the stories, tended to be very good or very bad, very powerful or very weak, Gorer's further hypothesis that "American men are unusually ambivalent toward women" may well be pertinent. However, it may be that choosing stories with so few women characters and usually assigning non-romantic roles to those present, is simply behavior consistent with the sexual latency which likely characterized the subjects at the 7 to 10-year ages of story selection. Even as young adults, the subjects may have failed to comment on the somewhat asexual character of the stories merely because, like most adults, they assumed that at 7 to 10 years or at any age children are, or should be, asexual.

The story hero gave little sign of wanting close relationships with people although he sometimes bestowed on them a sort of impersonal attention while demonstrating his own greater adequacy. On the other hand, he clearly showed an intense, unflagging interest, as well as great success, in dealing with objects. In this connection, Gorer's further impressions may be quoted: "In dealing with other people most American men (though not most American women) appear to be troubled by a feeling of basic insecurity. In contrast, their attitude toward things is untroubled by ambiguity, serene and confident, audacious and creative to an extent that no other society in the world has seen or imagined . . . The American dominates his material."

Wolfenstein (14), comparing American with English role expectancies, writes that *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* "express certain characteristic American attitudes about children. These boys are resourceful and independent . . . This legend of the good, strong, self-sufficient child expresses

an American ideal; that the child should from an early age sally forth and join his peers and be able to hold his own. Dependence and weakness in the child tend to be played down or disparaged . . . The image of the child in Dickens' novels is a very different one. While children appear as exceedingly noble, they are vulnerable and weak and need the protection of kindly adults . . . This contrast between British and American attitudes is epitomized in the endings of *Oliver Twist* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Oliver, after having undergone many gruesome experiences, as a helpless, unprotected child, finally enters into the haven of a good home into which he is adopted. Huck, faced with a similar prospect of adoption, decides to light out for the open road."

The one subject in the present study, who chose *Jack and the Beanstalk* as a childhood favorite, summarized the usual, English version of the story. Nevertheless, Wolfenstein's (15) remarks about its American variant seem to have a more general significance, in the context of this discussion: "the American emphasis is more on masculine exhibition . . . There is the fantasy here that the mother will welcome and admire the little boy's phallic showing off. . . . The English version, with its emphasis on giving and getting, its golden treasure and magical sources of supply, as well as the theme of a boy making things up to a mother whom he has made to suffer, has many more pre-phallic components than the American one."

Dolto (7), in somewhat similar vein, compares American with French children in psychoanalysis. "In psychoanalytic terms, the American child identifies the ego of any adult with his own ego and the id of an adult with his own id, and this as late as the age of ten or twelve. On the other hand, the French child feels himself to be different from the adult, whom he identifies with his superego or with his ego-ideal." Dolto further comments that "an American child is content to act with somebody. He will then have the impression of knowing the other and of being known by him . . . A French child needs to be acknowledged as a being that feels rather than as one that acts."

The story hero will next be considered, as planned, for possible signs of the wish-fulfillment features mentioned by Rank. Clues will be sought to the hero's own, implied wishes and, incidentally, to those of the subjects who, in their intense pleasure over his exploits, seem to have identified with him.

First, the most conspicuous and apparently appealing feature of the story hero was his remarkable adequacy; repeatedly, he overcame external obstacles in an active, independent, competitive way. So prevalent, so persistent, and so appealing was this trait that it must have been deeply desired and highly valued by the story hero and by his admirers. Indeed, despite their limited number, the subjects' unanimity here suggests that they have shared an important wish, vicariously fulfilled in a consequently appealing story.

In connection with this particular wish, Fromm (10), like other writers cited earlier in the discussion, attributes a strong craving for prestige and competitive success to the male in this culture. Like them, he discusses cultural and social factors which may contribute to this craving. However, Fromm then diverges to discuss what he considers to be the still more fundamental role of biological factors in determining the male craving for prestige and competitive success. It is his opinion that the importance of these biological factors is often overlooked not only in cultures like our own, where they supposedly blend with social factors to produce the same effect, but also in cultures where, instead, their effects are obscured by powerfully contradictory, social demands.

More specifically, Fromm states that universally the male, in order to satisfy himself and his partner, must demonstrate his sexual adequacy in the most obvious possible way and that, therefore, the characteristic and normal male anxiety is of openly failing. He assumes further that "man is deeply pervaded by a craving to prove constantly to himself, to the woman he loves, to all other women, and to all other men that he lives up to any expectation of him. He seeks reassurances against the fear of sexually failing by competing in all other spheres of life in which will power, physical

strength, and intelligence are useful in assuring success. Closely linked with this craving for prestige is his competitive attitude toward other men. Being afraid of possible failure, he needs to prove that he is better than any other man."

If Fromm is correct, the story hero's apparently strong desire, repeatedly and obviously to demonstrate his adequacy, reflects a generally experienced male wish, far from uniquely American. Whether social conditions or character structures, peculiarly American, have influenced the form in which the wish is expressed is another question and one with which observers like Erikson, Gorer, Wolfenstein, and Dolto seem to be concerned. In this connection, Fromm's further comment is of interest. "Thus, the negative forms in which man's fear of failure and his need for prestige can appear are obvious: vanity, lack of seriousness, unreliability, and boastfulness. But it seems no less obvious that the very same trait can result in very positive character traits: initiative, activity, and courage."

A second wish, to be identified always with male and never with female figures, seems implied in the subjects' invariable choice of a male as the leading story character whether or not he was really this prominent in the actual story. Apparently, even so vicariously, these men were not interested in exploring the nature of the opposite-sex role. In this respect they differed from the college women, described elsewhere²; the latter, while also tending to prefer same-sex characters as leading story figures, varied occasionally to name favorite stories with opposite-sex, leading characters and to so report them. Perhaps this contrasting behavior of the men and women might be explained by their sharing a common value system which allots prominence more readily to males than to females. This possibility is indeed suggested by the fact that, when the women did select stories with leading, feminine, characters, these were usually so intimately involved with other story characters that they seemed less obviously prominent than did the usually solitary, conspicuously dominant heroes of the men's stories.

A third desire, simply to be older, may be expressed in

the subjects' preference, as children, for story heroes who were adult or who, if children, nevertheless were endowed with the same, "mature" traits. Perhaps it was recalling such a wish to be grown up that led the subjects, retrospectively, to evaluate their favorite story as appropriate for children older than they had been on first encountering it.

It might be argued that, back of the preferences for the superficially atypical animal stories, lay a fourth, perhaps unconscious wish to be dependent, passive, and rescued. However, as previously indicated, it seems that, if this were unconsciously the case, yet consciously the animal stories were read with the same satisfied sense of enhanced activity and independence as were the other stories. And, for the purposes of this paper, attention is focused upon the subjects' apparently conscious wishes because the data seems inappropriate for testing hypotheses about their undoubtedly numerous, unconscious longings.

Some material, supplementary to the data previously described, will now be introduced; it is suggestive of wish-fulfilling, story features not mentioned by the subjects. Drawn from the work of several, highly articulate writers, this material may simply reflect the special sensitivities of persons destined, themselves, to write professionally. But alternatively it may describe reactions commonly experienced but less often so lucidly expressed.

First, Trilling (13), the American literary critic, proposes that stories like *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* fulfill a boy's wish to be told the truth: "Truth is the whole of a boy's conscious demand upon the world of adults. He is likely to believe that the adult world is in a conspiracy to lie to him, and it is this belief, by no means unfounded, that arouses Tom and Huck and all boys to their moral sensitivity, their everlasting concern with justice, which they call fairness. At the same time it often makes them skillful and profound liars in their own defense, yet they do not tell the ultimate lie of adults; they do not lie to themselves." Trilling later adds, "There are few other books which we can know so young and love so long."

That, sometimes, favorite stories might satisfy the wish for an integrative, imaginative and aesthetic experience is suggested by Baker (3), tracing and assessing Coleridge's theory of imagination. "To begin with, the deepest roots of Coleridge's theory of imagination are to be sought for in the *Bible* and in a highly imaginative childhood . . . In that remarkable series of autobiographical letters which he wrote to his friend, Thomas Poole, he tells how, curled up in the window seat of his father's vicarage, he lost himself in the world of the *Arabian Nights* and *Robinson Crusoe* . . . From the winter evening when, as a boy of eight, he had listened entranced to his father's discourse about the night sky, and from the time of his reading of fairy tales, 'my mind,' he says, 'had been habituated to the Vast, and I never regarded my senses as in any way the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my sight, even at that age.' Those, he adds, who are only educated through the senses 'seem to want a sense which I possess' . . . 'The universe to them is but a mass of little things.' Thus early the interior imaginative life was more important to Coleridge than the sad, existential world of contingency and absurdity. . . . The mature Coleridge valued the imagination as an ingress into a spiritual world in which all the manifolds of sensuous experiences was ultimately reducible to the One, the unchanging and the eternal. 'My mind feels as if it ached to behold and know something great, something one and indivisible.' "

Forster (9), an English critic and novelist, speaks not so much of the child's wish fulfillment as of the adult's, on turning back to the favorite stories of childhood. "I could lecture to you now on *The Swiss Family Robinson* and it would be a glowing lecture, because of the emotions felt in boyhood. When my brain decays entirely I shall not bother any more about great literature. I shall go back to the romantic shore where the 'ship struck with a fearful shock' emitting four demigods named Fritz, Ernest, Jack, and little Franz, together with their father, their mother, and a cushion which contained all the appliances necessary for a

ten years' residence in the tropics. That is my eternal summer, that is what *The Swiss Family Robinson means to me . . .*"

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to ascertain what stories had been preferred in childhood by a group of American college men; why they had been selected; and what light they might throw on Benedict's hypothesis that popular stories reflect cultural role expectancies and on Rank's thesis that wish-fulfilling features characterize well-liked stories. The subjects, 80 undergraduate men at Louisiana State University, were asked to recall and summarize their favorite childhood story, to name major characters and appealing features, and to compare past and present impressions of the story selected.

The results showed a preference for fiction, fairy, animal, religious, and biographical stories in that order. Except for the animal stories, the leading character in all stories was a human male, usually adult, often solitary. This hero overcame formidable, external obstacles in an exceedingly active and independent way; and his remarkable adequacy constituted the chief, reported source of story appeal. This appealing sense of enhanced adequacy was experienced by the subjects who selected animal stories through the device of favorably comparing their own greater potential for independent activity with that of the usually weaker, animal characters.

First encountered between the age of 7 and 10 years, during the so-called latency period, the favorite stories were sometimes chosen as a function of peer, but seldom of adult, preferences. Whether or not the stories were illustrated or had happy endings had little to do, apparently, with their being selected. As adults, the subjects usually chose the same, favorite story for children but sometimes for more literary reasons; they recommended using it with children slightly older than they had been on first encountering it.

The traits of the story hero were strikingly similar to

those characteristically assigned to the American male by the professionally trained observers of this and other cultures. This finding was consistent with Benedict's notion that popular stories reflect cultural role expectancies.

At least three conscious wishes seem to have been shared by the subjects and vicariously satisfied in the stories: to be conspicuously adequate, to be unmistakably male, and to be older than chronological age would warrant. The apparent unanimity of these wishes and their importance in determining story appeal was consistent with Rank's previously mentioned thesis. Reference was made briefly to three professional writers who mentioned other ways in which selected stories may have satisfied wishes not experienced, not recalled, or not mentioned by the subjects of this study.

For lack of appropriate data from other cultures, it was not possible to evaluate Benedict's implication, that cultural role expectancies and their corresponding story reflections vary from culture to culture, or Rank's notion that wishes, vicariously satisfied through reading preferred stories, are universally shared.

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FOOTNOTES

1. On leave of absence. Fulbright Lecturer in Psychology, The University of Helsinki, 1957-58.
2. See Collier, Mary J. and Gaier, E. L. (5, 6).

The Biblical Story of Ruth: Analytic Implications of the Hebrew Masoretic Text

by

Samuel A. Weiss, Ph.D.

THE BIBLICAL STORY OF RUTH

Common, everyday errors in speech and action, sometimes embarrassing and socially disruptive, often capture the imagination of both observer and perpetrator alike. In his "Psychopathology of Everyday Life" Freud (1) traces many such errors to deeply imbedded unconscious motives. The forgetting of names, words, ideas and resolutions; mistakes in speech, reading and writing, and the carrying-out of erroneous actions are very often unconscious protective devices to ward off anxiety or serve as expressions of covert aggression where open expression is inexpedient.

As supporting evidence for this hypothesis Freud offers numerous interesting anecdotes of patients, students and colleagues as well as highly revealing personal experiences. Most of the examples are comparatively brief, but some contain a dominant theme which serves to unify a number of isolated psychopathological errors and reveal the unconscious motivation causing them. There are also analyses of various literary selections including those of Shakespeare (2). The ingenuity of the analyses is very convincing and even carping

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critics can be convinced by some illustrations.

Most of the experiences are those of Freud and his sophisticated intimate circle of colleagues and disciples. These are subject to methodological examination. It may be claimed that the ubiquitous power of unconscious motivation may have been the progenitor of those illustrations which Freud and his colleagues cite as evidence. That is, after Freud had discovered the role of the unconscious, his own unconscious may have convinced him to have such psychopathological experiences in order to prove his theory. This applies even to those occurrences *before* Freud consciously formulated his theory. Thus, Freud and his sophisticated colleagues may have had the overwhelming motivation to experience slips of speech or to commit erroneous actions which could later be explained by the theoretical formulation. This criticism is, of course, not applicable to those of unsophisticated patients who furnish analysts with the bulk of supporting evidence. Nevertheless, it would be highly desirable if Freud's formulation were applied to literary accounts of ancient origin, especially those with an abundance of dialogue allowing for speech deviations. If it can be demonstrated that Freud's formulation, when applied to the verbal expressions and actions of the protagonists, reveals a well-knit, organized motivational theme clarifying the behavior of the characters, then Freud's hypothesis is enriched by so much more supporting evidence not subject to the stated methodological shortcomings.

It is posited by the writer that the Old Testament or Jewish Bible with its scrupulously guarded text, preserving every traditional annotation, is eminently suitable for analysis. In particular, the very short Biblical story of Ruth (3) (one of the world's earliest short stories) is very suitable for application of Freud's observations, since it contains 1) an abundance of dialogue, and 2) numerous *Masoretic* notations. Before proceeding to the analysis, a description of the Masoretic tradition and a review of the story of Ruth are necessary.

THE MASORAH (4)

The Masorah is the system of critical notes on the external form of the Biblical text. The notations represent the literary labors of many scholars who compared various manuscripts to ascertain the correct version of the texts as traditionally guarded by the Jewish people. Discussions of the texts date from ancient times till about the early fifteenth century. The term "Masorah" is associated with the word ("to hand down"), "tradition". The aspect of the Masorah relevant here is the system of marginal readings dealing with the variants found in Talmudic literature which are of three-fold character: 1) words to be read ("kere") for those written in the text ("ketib"); 2) words to be read for those not written in the text; (3) words written, but not to be read.

Tradition has ordained that specific rules applying to the above categories be scrupulously observed. Some of the substitute readings or emendations are frankly regarded by the Talmud as euphemistic substitutions to avoid blasphemous implications or derogatory statements about Biblical personalities. In regard to most notations no specific reason is given except the implication that a deeper esoteric meaning is inherent in the text. Numerous questions of Talmudic law were decided on the basis of the addition or omission of supernumerary vowel sounds and differences between the *kere* and *ketib* (5).

The variants of the Masorah shed light on the textual and literary accuracy of Biblical texts. It is our aim to demonstrate, in an analysis of the story of Ruth, how the Masorah sheds light on the motivations, conscious and unconscious, of the protagonists of the story. The Talmudic sages often explained the hidden motivations of Biblical characters in individual passages (6). Our aim, however, is to demonstrate how the Masoretic notations illuminate the motivations of the three principal characters, Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz and to delineate the interaction of these motives in forming a unified, cohesive theme. These feelings are re-

vealed in the dialogue where the variation of the *read* text (*kere*) from the *written* text (*ketib*) reveals the difference between conscious and unconscious meaning or motivation. The differences between the *kere* and the *ketib* may be more readily understood in the light of Freud's contribution in "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life". Also, the psychological integrity and cohesiveness of the story of Ruth is clearly seen in terms of the dynamic interaction among the three principal characters.

The Story of Ruth

In the period of the Judges the land of Israel was stricken with famine. A wealthy citizen of Bethlehem, Elimelech, left Israel with his family to live in the neighboring pagan country of Moab. Elimelech died and his two sons married Moabitite girls, Orpah and Ruth. After a stay of ten years the sons died. Naomi, Elimelech's widow, decided to return to Judah after the Lord had removed the plague of hunger and she and her daughters-in-law set forth on the journey. While thanking them for their kindness Naomi pleaded with her daughters-in-law to return to their homes, religion, and country, and to remarry. In a tender scene the girls insisted on accompanying her but Naomi underscored the futility of this desire. Orpah returned but Ruth persevered, proclaiming the famous credo, "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me" (7). Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest. Adversity had so affected the appearance of the aristocratic Naomi as to evoke surprise from all. Naomi bitterly requested that she be called "Marah" (bitter) rather than "Naomi" (pleasant) "for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord brought me back home empty" (8).

Ruth, in order to support Naomi and herself, decided to glean in the fields in accordance with the rights granted to

the poor (9). By chance she came to the fields of Boaz, a wealthy kinsman of the late Elimelech. (The Talmud states that Elimelech was the brother of Salmon (father of Boaz) (10). Boaz, attracted to the modest ways of Ruth, made special effort to aid her materially and enjoined upon her to stay with his maidens rather than go to different fields. Naomi was very pleased with this evidence of Boaz's kindness and bade Ruth to follow Boaz's advice. She decided that Boaz would be a good husband for Ruth, especially in view of the former's status as a kinsman which obligated him to redeem the sold property of her husband (11) and to perpetuate the names of her deceased sons (a customary extension of the Levirate laws) (12). She therefore advised Ruth to go one evening to Boaz's threshing-floor and to sleep at Boaz's feet. "Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the threshing-floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." (13)

Boaz is thus confronted by Ruth, who specifically requests him to marry her, "Spread therefore thy skirt over thy handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman" (14). Boaz thanks her for her attentions and promises to do so if a nearer kinsman does not exercise his prerogative. He requests that Ruth spend the night at the threshing-floor. Ruth leaves in the morning after receiving six measures of barley so that she will not return empty to Naomi.

On the following day Boaz confronts the nearer kinsman (his uncle, another brother of the late Elimelech and the father of Boaz) (15) who agrees to redeem the property of Ruth's late husband but refuses to introduce a rift into his own family by marrying Ruth. Thereupon, Boaz assumes the full obligation by the ceremony of the removing of the shoe (16). Boaz and Ruth are blessed by the elders. A child is born in time and named Oved, who is to be the father of Jesse and the grandfather of King David.

Analysis of the Story of Ruth

An analysis of the story is now in order.

The Midrash (17) notes a discrepancy between the statements of Ruth and Naomi. When recounting the graciousness of Boaz in urging her to limit her gleaning to the latter's fields Ruth states: "Yea, he said unto me: Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest." Naomi replies: "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, and that thou be not met in any other field" (18). Naomi substitutes "maidens" for "young men", thus correctly quoting Boaz in his declaration to Ruth: "but abide here fast by my maidens" (19). Naomi is better acquainted with Boaz's character and realizes that the latter is concerned with the possible annoyance of Ruth by the young men (20).

These passages point to a tendency of Ruth's part to commit speech errors. Possibly, as will be discussed, Ruth is cognizant of Naomi's firm attachment and identification with Boaz: "And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law: 'Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off His kindness to the living and to the dead'" (21). Naomi may therefore have been somewhat envious of Ruth's opportunity to contract this alliance with the distinguished Boaz. Some support for this interpretation may be seen in Naomi's failure to suggest that Ruth do her gleaning in Boaz's fields until Ruth had made the initial step herself.

In the following paragraphs the feelings of Naomi, Ruth and Boaz will be analyzed in terms of the Masoretic text. Strong motivations will be shown to account for the additions or subtractions in the text. In Hebrew, a very concise language, a slight declension of a verb, or an addition or subtraction of a single letter, often change meaning significantly.

Naomi advises Ruth: "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is there not Boaz, our kinsman, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the threshing-floor.

Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the threshing-floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." Ruth replies: "All that thou sayest unto me I will do" (22).

In the Hebrew Masoretic text the statement, "Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee and put thy raiment upon thee" is identical for both the *ketib* (written) and *keri* (read) texts. However, in the next phrase the written text is "V'yaradtee" ("I shall go down") instead of "V'yaradt" ("you shall go down"). In Hebrew the addition of the diminutive *yud* (‘), which is about one-third the usual size and resembles an apostrophe, changes the meaning from "you shall go down" to "I shall go down". The very same added *yud* is found in verse 4 when Naomi states, "And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in and uncover his feet and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do" (23). In the *ketib* the word is "V'shachavtee", ("I shall lie down") instead of the (read) (*keri*) "V'shachavt" ("you shall lie down"). Thus, in instructing Ruth, Naomi's intentions are revealed by the written text (*ketib*). *It is Naomi who has the desire to go down to the threshing-floor and sleep at the feet of Boaz, an individual she admires greatly!* (The "lying down with" expression is also the common Biblical euphemism for marital relations (24). Later when Ruth gives birth to Boaz's child, we are told, "And the women, her neighbors, gave it a name saying, 'There is a son born to Naomi' ". The expression of "There is a son born to Naomi" suggests Naomi's identification with Ruth. There is thus a consistent identification by Naomi with Ruth as concerns Boaz.

To continue with the analysis, Ruth replied to Naomi's instructions: "And she said unto her, 'All that thou sayest unto me, I will do'" (25). It is indicated in the Masoretic

text that "unto me" (עֲלָךְ) is read but not written. The absence of the word *ay-lie* ("unto me") in the Masoretic text thus indicates that Ruth is virtually saying, "All that thou sayest (really about your own intentions, not about mine) I shall do." The addition of "unto me" in the read text reveals the true meaning of Ruth's original statement to Naomi about the latter's unconscious intentions. Support for this interpretation is found in the role of the word *ay-lie*. The fact that the word *al-lie* is very emotionally tinged in conversational exchange between Ruth and Naomi is also seen when Ruth has returned from her night encounter with Boaz and the latter has given her six measures of barley. "And she said these six measures of barley gave he me; for he said *unto me*: 'Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law'" (26). Here, too, the word *ay-lie* is absent from the written text and added by the read text (26a). It should be noted in the above quotation that Boaz emphasizes the mother-in-law as the recipient of the six measures of barley.

The expression "Go not *empty* unto thy *mother-in-law*" is noteworthy for its symbolism. Naomi had, on returning from Moab, exclaimed to the townsmen of Bethlehem that she had returned *empty* from Moab (27). By planning to marry Ruth Boaz will fill Naomi's emptiness as symbolized by the gift of barley. The unconscious identification of Naomi with Ruth is evident in Boaz's statement.

An analysis of this encounter with Boaz is in order. Ruth goes to the threshing-floor and lies down at Boaz's feet. At midnight Boaz detects her, whereupon Ruth requests him to marry her, since he is a kinsman. Boaz thanks her for her interest in him rather than in the younger lads. (Note discussion above of the "young men"). Boaz is cognizant of her virtues and self-sacrifice, but informs Ruth that a closer kinsman exists who has priority. Should the latter refuse, Boaz would be very glad to marry her. In verse 12 the read text is, "And now it is true that I am thy kinsman" (28).

In the Masoretic text the word "*im*" is written but not read. The written text is, "And now it is true that *I may be*

thy kinsman". The removal of the word "im" (וְ) ("may be") by the Masoretic text implies that Boaz was unwilling to state the word "may be" since he wished to be the redeeming kinsman. Also, in the *ketib* Boaz says, "I buy" instead of "thou buyest" (the read text) when later speaking to the kinsman (29).

Boaz instructs her to remain until morning when he sends her home with six measures of barley. When informing her of the existence of a closer kinsman Boaz says: "Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning that if he will perform unto thee the part of the kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part; but if he be not willing to do the part of the kinsman to thee then will I do the part of the kinsman to thee. As the Lord liveth, lie down till morning" (30). The Hebrew for "Tarry this night" is "Lee-nee Ha-ly-lah" (לֵנִי הַלְלָה). There are two Masoretic versions for the word "Lee-nee", which means "tarry". In one version the first letter of "Lee-nee", the *lamed*, is capitalized. In the second version the N, *nun*, is capitalized. Capitalization is most unusual in Hebrew and when it occurs the commentaries usually seek an explanation. It is our contention that the capitalization here serves as an *emphasis of the particular syllable and its separation from the other*. Thus "Lee-nee" or "lee-Nee" involves separation of the two syllables. The word "Lee" means "to me". Boaz is saying, "Lee (minus nee) Ha-ly-lah" - "to me is this night". The Talmud states (31) that Boaz was sorely tempted to consummate the act immediately, since both were unmarried and Ruth was ritually clean, and only by self-abjuration did he manage to refrain. The motivation behind this slip of "Lee-nee" was his great temptation to say "Lee ha-ly-lah" - "the night belongs to me".

Chapter IV recounts the confronting of the nearer kinsman by Boaz in the presence of the elders. The kinsman, said by the Midrash to be one of the brothers of Ruth's deceased father-in-law, Elimelech, is willing to redeem the property of Ruth's deceased husband but not to introduce

strife into his family by marrying Ruth. Thus Boaz wins the right to marry Ruth.

When speaking to the kinsman Boaz says, "And I thought to disclose it unto thee," saying: 'Be it before them that wed her and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt retain it; retain it, but if it will not be retained then tell me that I may know, for there is none to retain it beside thee; and I am after thee' " (32). The word for "that I may know", "V'ayd-a" lacks the final letter, the unvoiced hay, or "h" (ה). The Masoretic text adds this letter, although the reading is not changed in any way; the punctuation is merely changed. This emendation from "V'ayd-a" to "V'ayd-ah" is really somewhat of a feminization of the word, "I shall know". The masculine form is "V'ayd-a" (minus the unvoiced "h" or Hebrew hay). However, if the final "h" is voiced then the word means, "I shall know *her*," i. e., with the voiced "h" "V'ayd-ah" is then not a feminized word but two words - *know her*. The word "know" is then in the masculine form. It is therefore suggested that the Masoretic text, by emending the word, was obliquely suggesting that Boaz was saying, "But if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that *I may know her* (another Biblical euphemism for marital relations!) Thus, in this instance, too, the Masoretic text's emendation reveals the underlying motivations in the words of the protagonists of this story of Ruth where the dialogue is so abundant and where the emendations of the Masoretic text are so numerous.

To summarize, Naomi regards Boaz as a very desirable individual whom she cannot marry because she is his aunt as well as considerably older than he. She therefore suggests Boaz as a prospective husband for Ruth who may originally have been attracted to the younger lads. In her instructions to Ruth, Naomi commits speech errors which indicate her identification with Ruth, her unconscious feelings for Boaz and the desire to have the rendezvous at the threshing-floor. Ruth is cognizant, at least subliminally, of her mother-in-law's feelings and of the implications of the latter's speech errors as revealed by the Masoretic emphasis of

the word "to me". Ruth asserts her own priority in suing for Boaz's hand. In the denouement Boaz reveals a desire to repress doubts as to his prior claim in 1) slips of the tongue, and 2) the symbolic action of presenting her with six measures of barley so that she may not leave the threshing floor emptyhanded. (The six measures of barley may be symbolic of the composition of Naomi's family before returning from Moab. He is replacing Naomi's family symbolically). The stress of the word "empty" symbolizes the desire to complete the 'emptiness'.

On the following day when the scene with the elders is depicted the textual emendations by the Masorah underscore Boaz's feelings while speaking to the kinsman. When the union of Boaz and Ruth is blessed with a child, Naomi assumes responsibility for it so wholeheartedly that the neighbors say, "A son is born to Naomi", thus supporting the contention that Naomi had identified herself with Ruth.

Evaluation

The unconscious identifications and motivations as revealed by our analysis of the Masoretic Text should not blind us to the *actual behavior* of the protagonists. Ruth, Naomi and Boaz, despite inner impulses, manage to behave in accordance with the mores of their Hebrew milieu - adherence to stringent moral law as established by Mosaic tradition. Despite Id pressures the Ego and Superego functioning of these protagonists are strong and balanced, enabling them to conquer the errant desires and impulses to which all humans are subject. The Talmudic maxim, "He who is greater than his neighbor has strong passions" (33) implies that moral rectitude is conceived of as being not an absence of desire but an ability to temper it in the face of moral demands or the Reality principle (34). Thus, Boaz conquers his desire for consummation despite inner drives and intellectual rationalizations as described by the Talmud. Ruth behaves respectfully and obediently toward her mother-in-law, notwithstanding her cognizance of Naomi's competitive tendencies and the latter sublimates her own feelings by identifying with Ruth and assuming responsibility for the

child. The Hebrew characters in this classic story manage to achieve the degree of the controlled and civilized behavior characterizing man in his enforced conformity with the Reality principle.

A folk tale about Moses is relevant here. A king, hearing of the exploits of the great Hebrew lawgiver, had his artist execute a portrait of Moses which was then analyzed by the wise men of his realm. These sages claimed that if they were to judge on the basis of his physiognomy, Moses must be an evildoer, characterized by pride, avarice, passion and similar ignoble traits. Moses, confronted with this opinion, confirmed the character analysis of the wise men. He did possess these propensities more than most individuals. However, "With great effort have I strengthened myself to master them until their opposite became my second nature so that I was able to rise above them." Had he lacked these propensities, Moses claimed, he might never have achieved his position (35).

This reveals the Hebrew view of character dispositions and the conversion of primitive, destructive drives via reaction formation, sublimation, identification, and other compensatory mechanisms into civilized behavior. Likewise is this true of the heroes of the Story of Ruth with regard to the difference between the unconscious drives and the sublimation of these drives into approved, socialized behavior.

Conclusion

The analysis of this Biblical short story in terms of analytic knowledge sheds very much light on the motivation of the characters. The interpretations offered are straightforward, although dependent on nuances of the Masoretic Text. The fact that there is a unity in theme in these interpretations of the Masoretic emendations strongly supports the logical and historical coherence of the analytic approach to deviations of tongue and speech. Also, the psychological unity of the Story of Ruth, in terms of the unconscious feelings of the

heroes and the actual conscious behavior of these individuals, is more readily appreciated.

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7. Ruth, 1:16-17.
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9. Deuteronomy 24:19-22
10. Baba Bathra, 91b
11. Leviticus 25:25
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13. Ruth 3:3-4
14. Ruth 3:9
15. Baba Bathra 91b
16. Deuteronomy 25:5-9
17. Midrash Ruth. See Yalkut Shimoni, II (6) above, p. 1042, paragraph 604, v. 3 (In Hebrew)
18. Ruth 2:21-22
19. Ruth 2:8
20. Ruth 2:9, 15
21. Ruth 2:20
22. Ruth 3:1-5
23. Ruth 3:4
24. Leviticus 15:24: Leviticus 20
25. Ruth 3:3
26. Ruth 3:17

26A. The word יְלִיכָה attracted the attention of the foremost Biblical commentary, Rashi (Rabbi Schlomo Yitzchaki of France, 11th Century) in Genesis 24:39 where יְלִיכָה is read as *perhaps* (oo-lie) and "to me" (ay-lie). (If יְלִיכָה were to be read in this paper as "perhaps" our analytic interpretation would deal with a deeper layer of the unconscious of the protagonists—with Ruth's ambivalence and Boaz' aspirations.)

The Biblical episode deals with Eliezer's journey to his master's (Patriarch Abraham) home in Syria in order to arrange for a suitable bride for Abraham's son, Isaac, since the Canaanite girls were unworthy. In the home of the chosen bride, Rebecca, Eliezer recounts the details of his mission to Syria: "And I said unto my lord, *perhaps* יְלִיכָה (oo-lie) the women will not go after me." In Eliezer's *original* conversation with Abraham (24:5) the word "perhaps" is written with the vowel אֹoh as יְאֹולֵיכָה which renders it unequivocally "perhaps," whereas here in verse 39, the ketib is יְלִיכָה allowing also for a reading as יְלִיכָה, "to me." Rashi states: "יְלִיכָה (ay-lie) is written (not יְאֹולֵיכָה, "perhaps"). Eliezer had a daughter and he was endeavoring to find some reason why Abraham should say that he must appeal to him (Eliezer) that he should give his daughter (in marriage to Isaac)." Rashi interprets the verse to read "And I said unto my lord, (ay-lie יְלִיכָה) 'to me' you will not go?" (See "Pentateuch," English translation by Rev. M. Rosenbaum and Dr. A. M. Silbermann, London, Shaprio, Valentine and Company, 1946. Genesis 24:39, p. 106-107.

27. Ruth 1:21
28. Ruth 3:12
29. Ruth 4:5
30. Ruth 3:13
31. Midrash Ruth, paragraph 606, (see (17) above)
32. Ruth 4:4
33. Sukkah 52b
34. Avoth, ch. IV, v. 1
35. Tifereth Yisrael, Commentary on the Mishnah, Kiddushin, Chapter 4, Comment 77, (Mishnah, Seder Nashim, Rom Publishing Co., 1935, Wilno, Poland, pp. 182-183). (in Hebrew).

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